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**PHILOSOPHICAL INQUIRY**  
**INTO THE**  
**ORIGIN OF OUR IDEAS**  
**OF THE**  
**SUBLIME AND BEAUTIFUL;**  
**WITH AN**  
**INTRODUCTORY DISCOURSE**  
**CONCERNING**  
**T A S T E.**

**BY THE**  
**RIGHT HON. EDMUND BURKE.**

**ADAPTED TO POPULAR USE**

**BY**  
**ABRAHAM MILLS, A.M.,**  
**PROFESSOR OF RHETORIC AND BELLES LETTRES.**

**NEW-YORK:**  
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**1844.**



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## EDITOR'S PREFACE

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THE high estimation in which the following treatise on the Sublime and Beautiful is uniformly held, removes from the editor ~~of the~~ present edition the necessity of attempting to set forth its peculiar merits. Its utility and importance in forming the taste of the scholar, and in giving a proper direction to his mind, are universally admitted. Without enlarging, therefore, the editor proceeds to assign his reasons for offering the present volume to the public.

In the editions of the work hitherto published, there are some passages which violate that delicacy of expression that should peculiarly characterize the language of books designed for the use of schools.

From this edition those passages are carefully expunged, without interrupting, in the smallest degree, the chain of the author's reasoning; it may, therefore, now be used with perfect propriety.

In order to facilitate the study of the work, all the Latin and Greek quotations, made by the author, have been clothed in a free translation; so that the scholar will not be perplexed in his studies, as is often the case, by repeatedly meeting with illustrations which he does not understand.

*The present edition is also accompanied with inter-*

rogations, the necessity of which was suggested to the editor by the experience of a number of years in the use of the work without them. These interrogations were prepared with the greatest care, and are intended so to evolve the substance of the author as to require connected answers, which must be, in themselves, intelligible sentences.

With these improvements, the work is submitted to the public, with the utmost confidence that it will be received according to its intrinsic excellence.

*New-York, Feb., 1829.*

## P R E F A C E.

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I HAVE endeavored to make this edition something more full and satisfactory than the first. I have sought with the utmost care, and read with equal attention, every thing which has appeared in public against my opinions; I have taken advantage of the candid liberty of my friends; and if by these means I have been better enabled to discover the imperfections of the work, the indulgence it has received, imperfect as it was, furnished me with a new motive to spare no reasonable pains for its improvement. Though I have not found sufficient reason, or what appeared to me sufficient, for making any material change in my theory, I have found necessary, in many places, to explain, illustrate, and enforce it; I have prefixed an introductory discourse concerning Taste: it is a matter curious in itself, and it leads naturally enough to the principal inquiry. This, with the other explanations, has made the work considerably larger, and, by increasing its bulk, has, I am afraid, added to its faults; so that, notwithstanding all my attention, it may stand in need of a yet greater share of indulgence than it required at its first appearance.

They who are accustomed to studies of this nature will expect, and they will allow, too, for many faults. They know that many of the objects of our inquiry are in themselves obscure and intricate; and that many others have been rendered so by affected refinements or false learning; they know that there are many impediments in the subject, in the prejudice of others, and even in our own, that render it a matter of no

small difficulty to show, in a clear light, the genuine face of nature. They know that while the mind is intent on the general scheme of things, some particular parts must be neglected; that we must often submit the style to the matter, and frequently give up the praise of elegance, satisfied with being clear.

The characters of nature are legible, it is true; but they are not plain enough to enable those who run to read them. We must make use of a cautious, I had almost said, a timorous method of proceeding. We must not attempt to fly, when we can scarcely pretend to creep. In considering any complex matter, we ought to examine every distinct ingredient in the composition, one by one, and reduce every thing to the utmost simplicity, since the condition of our nature binds us to a strict law and very narrow limits. We ought afterward to re-examine the principles by the effect of the composition, as well as the composition by that of the principles. We ought to compare our subject with things of a similar nature, and even with things of a contrary nature; for discoveries may be, and often are, made by the contrast, which would escape us on the single view. The greater number of the comparisons we make, the more general and the more certain our knowledge is like to prove, as built upon a more extensive and perfect induction.

If an inquiry thus carefully conducted should fail at last of discovering the truth, it may answer an end, perhaps, as useful, in discovering to us the weakness of our own understanding. If it does not make us knowing, it may make us modest. If it does not preserve us from error, it may, at least, from the spirit of error; and may make us cautious of pronouncing with *positiveness or with haste*, when so much labour may end *in so much uncertainty.*

I could wish that, in examining this theory, the same method were pursued which I endeavored to observe in forming it. The objections, in my opinion, ought to be proposed, either to the several principles as they are distinctly considered, or to the justness of the conclusion which is drawn from them. But it is common to pass over both the premises and conclusion in silence, and to produce, as an objection, some poetical passage which does not seem easily accounted for upon the principles I endeavor to establish. This manner of proceeding I should think very improper. The task would be infinite, if we could establish no principle until we had previously unraveled the complex texture of every image or description to be found in poets and orators. And though we should never be able to reconcile the effect of such images to our principles, this can never overturn the theory itself, while it is founded on certain and indisputable facts. A theory founded on experiment, and not assumed, is always good for so much as it explains. Our inability to push it indefinitely is no argument at all against it. This inability may be owing to our ignorance of some necessary *mediums* : to want of proper application ; to many other causes besides a defect in the principles we employ. In reality, the subject requires a much closer attention than we dare claim from our manner of treating it.

If it should not appear on the face of the work, I must caution the reader against imagining that I intended a dissertation on the Sublime and Beautiful. My inquiry went no farther than to the origin of these ideas. If the qualities which I have ranged under the head of the Sublime be all found consistent with each other, and all different from those which I place under the head of Beauty ; and if those which compose the

class of the Beautiful have the same consistency with themselves, and the same opposition to those which are classed under the denomination of Sublime, I am in little pain whether any body chooses to follow the name I give them or not, provided he allows that what I disposed under different heads are in reality different things in nature. The use I make of the words may be blamed, as too confined, or too extended ; my meaning can not well be misunderstood.

To conclude : whatever progress may be made toward the discovery of truth in this matter, I do not repent the pains I have taken in it. The use of such inquiries may be very considerable. Whatever turns the soul inward on itself tends to concentrate its forces, and to fit it for greater and stronger flights of science. By looking into physical causes, our minds are opened and enlarged ; and in this pursuit, whether we take, or whether we lose or gain, the chase is certainly of service. Cicero, true as he was at the Academic philosophy, and, consequently, led to reject the certainty of physical, as of every other kind of knowledge, yet freely confesses its great importance to the human understanding : "*Est amimorum ingeniorumque nostrorum naturale quoddam quasi pabulum consideratio contemplatioque naturæ.*" If we can direct the lights we derive from such exalted speculations upon the humbler field of the imagination, while we investigate the springs, and trace the courses of our passions, we may not only communicate to the taste a sort of philosophical solidity, but we may reflect back on the severer sciences some of the graces and elegances of taste without which the greatest proficiency in those sciences will always have the appearance of something *il liberal*.

## CRITICAL NOTICE.

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THE following critical notice of the first edition of this work was written by the late William Leggett, Esq., and published in the "Critic," a weekly periodical of which he was, at that time, the editor. To the present edition the notice is as applicable as it was to that, as the work has since undergone no alteration whatever.

The New-York American, the Courier and Enquirer, the Commercial Advertiser, the New-York Observer, and all the other leading journals of the city, contained corresponding views of the merits, both of the original "Inquiry," and of the labors of the editor.

"A Philosophical Inquiry into the Origin of our Ideas of the Sublime and Beautiful. With an Introductory Discourse concerning Taste. By the Right Hon. Edmund Burke. Adapted to popular use by Abraham Mills, Teacher of Rhetoric and Belles-Lettres. 12mo. New-York, 1829. G. C. & H. Carvill.

"Of the character of Burke's admirable treatise on the Sublime and Beautiful, a work that has been so long and thoroughly known, and so highly estimated by all who have any pretensions to letters, it would be indeed superfluous, at this day, to enter into an examination. But, notwithstanding the high reputation which it has deservedly acquired, on account of its pervading merits, and its very great utility in improving the taste, and giving a proper direction to the mind of the scholar, it has always been an objection to this ster-



ling production, that, in some parts, it was stained with indelicacies of thoughts and allusion which could not but have a pernicious influence on juvenile learners, and which constituted a sufficient barrier to its introduction into institutions for the instruction of females.

“To do away with these unseemly blemishes, without materially changing the language of the author, and without interrupting, in any degree, the chain of his reasoning, has been the principal motive of the present editor; and in this we have great pleasure in saying that he has so fully succeeded, that there is not now, throughout the whole 250 pages of the volume before us, a single passage wherein that purity of thought or expression is violated, by which all works should be characterized, but especially those which are intended for the use of schools. In some instances this end has been effected by expunging a few objectionable sentences, and, in others, by a slight alteration of the original text.

“To extend the usefulness of this work, the present editor has annexed to all the Latin and Greek quotations made use of in the course of it a free translation into English; thus doing away with those unpleasant obstructions which impede the progress of a mere English scholar, and frequently turn him aside from studies that would otherwise be pursued with equal pleasure and advantage. In addition to this improvement, questions are subjoined at the foot of every page, intended to exercise the learner, and impress on his mind the whole substance of the author. These appear to us to have been prepared with great care and skill. The editor of this expurgated edition of Burke on the Sublime and Beautiful has been facilitated in his labor *by long experience as a teacher*; and he has produced

a work which we can commend, with the utmost confidence, to general adoption in seminaries for the instruction of young persons of either sex throughout the Union. Why the task which he has so ably accomplished has not been undertaken before, is really a matter of surprise, when the great and acknowledged importance of this treatise to Belles-Lettres scholars is considered. But perhaps it is well for future students that it was reserved for Mr. Mills: for he has acquitted himself in a manner which at once reflects the highest credit on himself, and will prove of the utmost service to those whose attention shall be directed to the volume which he has produced.

"It remains for us but to add that the mechanical execution of the work comports with its intrinsic excellence, and is another specimen of that neatness of typography by which the publications of the Carvills are usually distinguished."



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# INTRODUCTION.

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## ON TASTE.

ON a superficial view, we may seem to differ very widely from each other in our reasonings, and no less in our pleasures ; but, notwithstanding this difference, which I think to be rather apparent than real, it is probable that the standard both of Reason and Taste is the same in all human creatures ; for if there were not some principles of judgment as well as of sentiment common to all mankind, no hold could possibly be taken, either on their reason or their passions, sufficient to maintain the ordinary correspondence of life. It appears, indeed, to be generally acknowledged, that with regard to truth and falsehood, there is something fixed. We find people in their disputes continually appealing to certain tests and standards, which are allowed on all sides, and are supposed to be established in our common nature. But there is not the same obvious concurrence in any uniform or settled principles which relate to Taste. It is even commonly supposed that this delicate and aerial faculty, which seems too volatile to endure even the chains of a definition, can not be properly tried by any test, nor regulated by any standard. There is so continual a call for the exercise

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From what does it appear probable that the standard of both Reason and Taste is the same in all human creatures ? How does it appear that with regard to truth and falsehood there is something fixed ? Is there the same obvious concurrence in reference to the principles which relate to Taste ? Of this delicate and aerial faculty what is commonly supposed ?



of the reasoning faculty, and it is so much strengthened by perpetual contention, that certain maxims of right reason seem to be tacitly settled among the most ignorant. The learned have improved on this rude science, and reduced those maxims into a system. If Taste has not been so happily cultivated, it was not that the subject was barren, but that the laborers were few or negligent; for, to say the truth, there are not the same interesting motives to impel us to fix the one which urge us to ascertain the other. And, after all, if men differ in their opinion concerning such matters, their difference is not attended with the same important consequences; else I make no doubt that the logic of Taste, if I may be allowed the expression, might very possibly be as well digested, and we might come to discuss matters of this nature with as much certainty, as those which seem more immediately within the province of mere reason. And, indeed, it is very necessary, at the entrance into such an inquiry as the present, to make this point as clear as possible; for if Taste has no fixed principles, if the imagination is not affected according to some invariable and certain laws, our labor is likely to be employed to very little purpose; as it must be judged a useless, if not an absurd, undertaking, to lay down rules for caprice, and to set up for a legislator of whims and fancies.

The term Taste, like all other figurative terms, is not extremely accurate; the thing which we under-

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Why have certain maxims of right reason been tacitly settled among the most ignorant? How have the learned improved on this rude science? Why has not Taste been so happily cultivated? If differences in opinion with respect to Taste were attended with the same important consequences that differences with respect to Reason are, what would follow? Why is it necessary, at the entrance into such an inquiry as the present, to make *this point as clear as possible?*

stand by it is far from a simple and determinate idea in the minds of most men, and it is therefore liable to uncertainty and confusion. I have no great opinion of a definition, the celebrated remedy for the cure of this disorder; for when we define, we seem in danger of circumscribing Nature within the bounds of our own notions, which we often take up at hazard, or embrace on trust, or form out of a limited and partial consideration of the object before us, instead of extending our ideas to take in all that Nature comprehends, according to her manner of combining. We are limited in our inquiry by the strict laws to which we have submitted at our setting out.

"Circa vilem patulumque morabimur orbem,  
Unde pudor proferre pedem vetat aut operis lex."

"We shall linger about this vile and wide-spread world, whence shame, or the law of labor, forbids us to move our footsteps."

A definition may be very exact, and yet go but a very little way toward informing us of the nature of the thing defined; but let the virtue of a definition be what it may in the order of things, it seems rather to follow than to precede our inquiry, of which it ought to be considered as the result. It must be acknowledged that the methods of disquisition and teaching may be sometimes different, and on very good reason, undoubtedly; but, for my part, I am convinced that the method of teaching which approaches most nearly to the method of investigation is incomparably the best; since, not content with serving up a few barren and lifeless truths, it leads to the stock on which they grew; it tends to set the reader himself in the track of inven-

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Why is the term Taste liable to uncertainty and confusion? In defining Taste, of what do we seem in danger? Why is not a definition here requisite? Why is the method of teaching which approaches the most nearly to investigation the best?

tion, and to direct him into those paths in which the author has made his own discoveries, if he should be so happy as to have made any that are valuable.

But, to cut off all pretence for caviling, I mean by the word Taste no more than that faculty or those faculties of the mind which are affected with, or which form a judgment of, the works of imagination and the elegant arts. This is, I think, the most general idea of that word, and what is the least connected with any particular theory. And my point, in this inquiry, is to find whether there are any principles, on which the imagination is affected, so common to all, so grounded and certain, as to supply the means of reasoning satisfactorily about them. And such principles of taste I fancy there are, however paradoxical it may seem to those who, on a superficial view, imagine that there is so great a diversity of tastes, both in kind and degree, that nothing can be more indeterminate.

All the natural powers in man, with which I am acquainted, that are conversant about external objects, are the senses, the imagination, and the judgment. And, first, with regard to the Senses. We do, and we must suppose, that, as the conformation of their organs are nearly or altogether the same in all men, so the manner of perceiving external objects is in all men the same, or with little difference. We are satisfied that what appears to be light to one eye appears light to another; that what seems sweet to one palate, is sweet to another; that what is dark and bitter to this man, is likewise dark and bitter to that; and we con-

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What is meant by the word Taste? In this inquiry, what is the object? What are all the natural powers of man that are conversant about external objects? Why is the manner of perceiving external objects in all men so nearly the same? How is this illustrated?

clude, in the same manner, of great and little, hard and soft, hot and cold, rough and smooth, and, indeed, of all the natural qualities and affections of bodies. If we suffer ourselves to imagine that their senses present to different men different images of things, this sceptical proceeding will make every sort of reasoning, on every subject, vain and frivolous, even that sceptical reasoning itself which had persuaded us to entertain a doubt concerning the agreement of our perceptions. But, as there will be little doubt that bodies present similar images to the whole species, it must necessarily be allowed, that the pleasures and the pains which every object excites in one man, it must raise in all mankind, while it operates naturally, simply, and by its proper powers only ; for, if we deny this, we must imagine that the same cause, operating in the same manner, and on subjects of the same kind, will produce different effects, which would be highly absurd. Let us first consider this point in the sense of taste, and the rather as the faculty in question has taken its name from that sense. All men are agreed to call vinegar sour, honey sweet, and aloes bitter ; and as they are all agreed in finding these qualities in those objects, they do not in the least differ concerning their effects with regard to pleasure and pain. They all concur in calling sweetness pleasant, and sourness and bitterness unpleasant. Here there is no diversity in their sentiments ; and that there is not, appears fully from the consent of all men in the meta-

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What will be the consequence of suffering ourselves to imagine that their senses present to different men different images of things ? There being little doubt that bodies present similar images to the whole species, what must be allowed, and why ? In what are all men agreed ? and what follows ? In what farther are they agreed ? How does it appear that there is no diversity in their sentiments on this subject ?

phors which are taken from the sense of Taste. A sour temper, bitter expressions, bitter curses, a bitter fate, are terms well and strongly understood by all; and we are altogether as well understood when we say a sweet disposition, a sweet person, a sweet condition, and the like. It is confessed that custom, and some other causes, have made many deviations from the natural pleasures or pains which belong to these several tastes; but then the power of distinguishing between the natural and the acquired relish remains to the very last. A man frequently comes to prefer the taste of tobacco to that of sugar, and the flavour of vinegar to that of milk; but this makes no confusion in tastes, while he is sensible that the tobacco and vinegar are not sweet, and while he knows that habit alone has reconciled his palate to these alien pleasures. Even with such a person we may speak, and with sufficient precision, concerning tastes. But should any man be found who declares that to him tobacco has a taste like sugar, and that he can not distinguish between milk and vinegar; or that tobacco and vinegar are sweet, milk bitter, and sugar sour, we immediately conclude that the organs of this man are out of order, and that his palate is utterly vitiated. We are as far from conferring with such a person upon tastes, as from reasoning concerning the relations of quantity with one who should deny that all the parts together were equal to the whole. We do not call a man of this kind wrong in his notions, but absolutely mad. / Exceptions of this sort, in either way, do not at all

What examples are given? What is here confessed? But what power still remains? Why does not the preference given by some men to things alien to the natural palate produce confusion in tastes? What do we conclude of the man who declares that to him tobacco has a taste like sugar, &c.? Why do not exceptions of this sort, in either way, impeach our general rule?

impeach our general rule, nor make us conclude that men have various principles concerning the relations of quantity, or the taste of things. So that when it is said, Taste can not be disputed, it can only mean that no one can strictly answer what pleasure or pain some particular man may find from the taste of some particular thing. This, indeed, can not be disputed; but we may dispute, and with sufficient clearness, too, concerning the things which are naturally pleasing or disagreeable to the sense. But when we talk of any peculiar or acquired relish, then we must know the habits, the prejudices, or the distempers of this particular man, and we must draw our conclusion from those.

This agreement of mankind is not confined to the taste solely. The principle of pleasure derived from sight is the same in all. Light is more pleasing than darkness. Summer, when the earth is clad in green, when the heavens are serene and bright, is more agreeable than winter, when every thing makes a different appearance. I never remember that any thing beautiful, whether a man, a beast, a bird, or a plant, was ever shown, though it were to a hundred people, that they did not all immediately agree that it was beautiful, though some might have thought that it fell short of their expectation, or that other things were still more beautiful than it. I believe no man thinks a goose to be more beautiful than a swan, or imagines that what they call a Friezland hen exceeds a peacock. It must be observed, too, that the pleasures of the sight are not near so complicated, and confused, and altered

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How is it illustrated that this agreement of mankind is not confined to taste solely? What evidence have we that all men agree in pronouncing that beautiful which is intrinsically so? Why are not the pleasures of sight so complicated and confused as the pleasures of taste?

by unnatural habits and associations, as the pleasures of the taste are ; because the pleasures of the sight more commonly acquiesce in themselves, and are not so often altered by considerations which are independent of the sight itself. But things do not spontaneously present themselves to the palate as they do to the sight ; they are generally applied to it either as food or as medicine ; and, from the qualities which they possess for nutritive or medicinal purposes, they often form the palate by degrees, and by force of these associations. Thus, opium is pleasing to Turks, on account of the agreeable delirium it produces. Tobacco is the delight of Dutchmen, as it diffuses a torpor and pleasing stupefaction. Fermented spirits please our common people, because they banish care, and all considerations of future or present evils. All of these would lie absolutely neglected, if their properties had originally gone no farther than the taste ; but all these, together with tea and coffee, and some other things, have passed from the apothecary's shop to our tables, and were taken for health long before they were thought of for pleasure. The effect of the drug has made us use it frequently ; and frequent use, combined with the agreeable effect, has made the taste itself at last agreeable. But this does not in the least perplex our reasoning, because we distinguish, to the last, the acquired from the natural relish. In describing the taste of an unknown fruit, you would scarcely say that it had a sweet and pleasant flavor like tobacco, opium, or garlic, although you spoke to those who were in

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How is the palate often formed ? What examples are given ? Under what circumstances would all of these lie absolutely neglected ? How has the agreeableness of their taste been produced ? Why does not this perplex our reasoning ? How is this illustrated ?

the constant use of these drugs, and had great pleasure in them. There is, in all men, a sufficient remembrance of the original natural causes of pleasure to enable them to bring all things offered to their senses to that standard, and to regulate their feelings and opinions by it. Suppose one, who had so vitiated his palate as to take more pleasure in the taste of opium than in that of butter or honey, to be presented with a bolus of squills; there is hardly any doubt that he would prefer the butter or honey to this nauseous morsel, or to any other bitter drug to which he had not been accustomed; which proves that his palate was naturally like that of other men in all things, that it is still like the palate of other men in many things, and only vitiated in some particular points. For, in judging of any new thing, even of a taste similar to that which he has been formed by habit to like, he finds his palate affected in the natural manner, and on the common principles. Thus, the pleasure of all the senses, of the sight, and even of the taste, that most ambiguous of the senses, is the same in all, high and low, learned and unlearned.

Besides the ideas, with their annexed pains and pleasures which are presented by the sense, the mind of man possesses a sort of creative power of its own; either in representing at pleasure the images of things in the order and manner in which they were received by the senses, or in combining those images in a new manner, and according to a different order. This power is called Imagination; and to this belongs whatever is called wit, fancy, invention, and the like. But it must be observed, that the power of the imagination

What exists in all men? How is this illustrated? Define that power which we call imagination. What belongs to it?



is incapable of producing any thing absolutely new : it can only vary the disposition of those ideas which it has received from the senses. Now the imagination is the most extensive province of pleasure and pain, as it is the region of our fears and our hopes, and of all our passions that are connected with them ; and whatever is calculated to affect the imagination with these commanding ideas, by force of any original natural impression, must have the same power, pretty equally, over all men. For, since the imagination is only the representation of the senses, it can only be pleased or displeased with the images, from the same principle on which the senses are pleased or displeased with the realities ; and, consequently, there must be just as close an agreement in the imaginations as in the senses of men. A little attention will convince us that this must of necessity be the case.

But in the imagination, besides the pain or pleasure arising from the properties of the natural object, a pleasure is perceived from the resemblance which the imitation has to the original : the imagination, I conceive, can have no pleasure but what results from one or other of these causes. And these causes operate pretty uniformly upon all men, because they operate by principles in nature, and which are not derived from any particular habits or advantage. Mr. Locke very justly and finely observes of wit, that it is chiefly conversant in tracing resemblances : he remarks, at

As the imagination cannot produce any thing absolutely new, what only can it do ? Why is the imagination the most extensive province of pleasure and pain ? Why must whatever is calculated to affect the imagination with these commanding ideas have the same power over all men ? What pleasure is perceived in the imagination besides the pain or pleasure arising from the properties of the natural object ? What evidence is there that these causes operate pretty uniformly upon all men ? What does Mr. Locke observe of wit and judgment ?

the same time, that the business of judgment is rather in finding differences. It may, perhaps, appear, on this supposition, that there is no material distinction between the wit and the judgment, as they both seem to result from different operations of the same faculty of *comparing*. But, in reality, whether they are or are not dependent on the same power of the mind, they differ so very materially in many respects, that a perfect union of wit and judgment is one of the rarest things in the world. When two distinct objects are unlike to each other, it is only what we expect: things are in their common way, and therefore they make no impression on the imagination; but when two distinct objects have a resemblance, we are struck, we attend to them, and we are pleased. The mind of man has naturally a far greater alacrity and satisfaction in tracing resemblances than in searching for differences, because, by making resemblances, we produce new images; we unite, we create, we enlarge our stock: but in making distinctions, we offer no food at all to the imagination; the task itself is more severe and irksome, and what pleasure we derive from it is something of a negative and indirect nature. [A piece of news is told me in the morning; this, merely as a piece of news, as a fact added to my stock, gives me some pleasure. In the evening, I find there was nothing in it. What do I gain by this but the dissatisfaction to find that I had been imposed upon! Hence it is that men are much more naturally inclined to belief than to incredulity. And it is upon this principle that the

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On this supposition, what may perhaps appear? To what extent do they in reality differ? How is this illustrated? Why has the mind of man naturally a greater alacrity and satisfaction in tracing resemblances than in searching for differences? How is this fully illustrated?

\* most ignorant and barbarous nations have frequently excelled in similitude, comparisons, metaphors, and allegories, who have been weak and backward in distinguishing and sorting their ideas. And it is for a reason of this kind that Homer and the Oriental writers, though very fond of similitudes, and though they often strike out such as are truly admirable, seldom take care to have them exact; that is, they are taken with the general resemblance, they paint it strongly, and they take no notice of the difference which may be found between the things compared.

Now, as the pleasure of resemblance is that which principally flatters the imagination, all men are nearly equal on this point, as far as their knowledge of the things represented or compared extends. The principle of this knowledge is quite accidental, as it depends upon experience and observation, and not on the strength or weakness of any natural faculty; and it is from this difference in knowledge that what we commonly, though with no great exactness, call a difference in taste, proceeds. A man to whom sculpture is new, sees a barber's block, or some ordinary piece of statuary: he is immediately struck and pleased, because he sees something like a human figure; and, entirely taken up with this likeness, he does not at all attend to its defects. No person, I believe, at the first time of seeing a piece of imitation, ever did. Some time after, we suppose that this novice lights upon a more artificial work of the same nature; he now begins to look with contempt on what he admired at first: not that he admired it even then for its unlike-

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From what does what we commonly call a difference in taste proceed? How is this illustrated? With the increase of his knowledge does his *taste alter*?

ness to a man, but for that general, though inaccurate resemblance which it bore to the human figure. What he admired, at different times, in these so different figures, is strictly the same; and, though his knowledge is improved, his taste is not altered. Hitherto his mistake was from a want of knowledge in art, and this arose from his inexperience; but he may be still deficient from a want of knowledge in nature. For it is possible that the man in question may stop here, and that the master-piece of a great hand may please him no more than the middling performance of a vulgar artist; and this not for want of better or higher relish, but because all men do not observe with sufficient accuracy on the human figure to enable them to judge properly of an imitation of it. And that the critical taste does not depend upon a superior principle in men, but upon superior knowledge, may appear from several instances. The story of the ancient painter and the shoemaker is very well known. The shoemaker set the painter right with regard to some mistakes he had made in the shoe of one of his figures, which the painter, who had not made such accurate observations on shoes, and was content with a general resemblance, had never observed. But this was no impeachment of the taste of the painter: it only showed some want of knowledge in the art of making shoes. Let us imagine that an anatomist had come into the painter's working-room: his piece is in general well done, the figure in question in a good attitude, and the parts well adjusted to their various movements: yet the anatomist, critical in his art, may observe the swell of some muscle not quite just in the peculiar action of

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What was hitherto his mistake? and from what did it arise? What mark shows that he may still be deficient from a want of knowledge in nature?

the figure. Here the anatomist observes what the painter had not observed, and he passes by what the shoemaker had remarked. But a want of the last critical knowledge in anatomy no more reflected on the natural good taste of the painter, or of any common observer of his piece, than the want of an exact knowledge in the formation of a shoe. A fine piece of a decollated head of St. John the Baptist was shown to a Turkish emperor: he praised many things; but he observed one defect: he observed that the skin did not shrink from the wounded part of the neck. The sultan on this occasion, though his observation was very just, discovered no more natural taste than the painter who executed this piece, or than a thousand European connoisseurs, who probably never would have made the same observation. His Turkish majesty had, indeed, been well acquainted with that terrible spectacle, which the others could only have represented in their imagination. On the subject of their dislike there is a difference between all these people, arising from the different kinds and degrees of their knowledge; but there is something in common to the painter, the shoemaker, the anatomist, and the Turkish emperor: the pleasure arising from a natural object, so far as each perceives it justly imitated; the satisfaction in seeing an agreeable figure; the sympathy proceeding from a striking and affecting incident. So far as taste is natural, it is nearly common to all.

In poetry, and other pieces of imagination, the same parity may be observed. It is true that one man is

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What three instances are given to show that the critical taste does not depend upon a superior principle in men, but upon superior knowledge? In these instances, what is common to the painter; to the shoemaker, to the anatomist, and to the Turkish emperor? How may the same parity be observed in poetry and other pieces of imagination?

charmed with Don Bellianis, and reads Virgil coldly ; while another is transported with the *Æneid*, and leaves Don Bellianis to children. These two men seem to have a taste very different from each other ; but, in fact, they differ very little. In both these pieces, which inspire such opposite sentiments, a tale exciting admiration is told ; both are full of action, both are passionate ; in both are voyages, battles, triumphs, and continual changes of fortune. The admirer of Don Bellianis, perhaps, does not understand the refined language of the *Æneid*, who, if it was degraded into the style of the *Pilgrim's Progress*, might feel it in all its energy, on the same principle which made him an admirer of Don Bellianis.

In his favorite author he is not shocked with the continual breaches of probability, the confusion of times, the offences against manners, the trampling upon geography ; for he knows nothing of geography and chronology, and he has never examined the grounds of probability. He, perhaps, reads of a shipwreck on the coast of Bohemia : wholly taken up with so interesting an event, and only solicitous for the fate of his hero, he is not in the least troubled at this extravagant blunder. For why should he be shocked at a shipwreck on the coast of Bohemia, who does not know but that Bohemia may be an island in the Atlantic Ocean ? And, after all, what reflection is this on the natural good taste of the person here supposed ?

(So far, then, as taste belongs to the imagination, its principle is the same in all men : there is no difference

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Why is not the admirer of Don Bellianis shocked with the continual breaches of probability, &c., of the author ? In reading an account of a shipwreck on the coast of Bohemia, why is he not troubled at the author's *extravagant blunder* ?

in the manner of their being affected, nor in the causes of the affection; but in the degree there is a difference, which arises principally from two causes: either from a greater degree of natural sensibility, or from a closer and longer attention to the object. To illustrate this by the procedure of the senses, in which the same difference is found, let us suppose a very smooth marble table to be set before two men: they both perceive it to be smooth, and they are both pleased with it because of this quality. So far they agree. But suppose another, and after that another table, the latter still smoother than the former, to be set before them. It is now very probable that these men, who are so agreed upon what is smooth, and in the pleasure from thence, will disagree when they come to settle which table has the advantage in point of polish. Here is, indeed, the great difference between tastes, when men come to compare the excess or diminution of things which are judged by degree, and not by measure. Nor is it easy, when such a difference arises, to settle the point, if the excess or diminution be not glaring. If we differ in opinion about two quantities, we can have recourse to a common measure, which may decide the question with the utmost exactness; and this, I take it, is what gives mathematical knowledge a greater certainty than any other. But, in things whose excess is not judged by greater or smaller, as smoothness and roughness, hardness and softness, darkness and light, the shades of colors, all these are very easily distinguished when the difference is any way

What are the two causes that produce different degrees of taste in men? How may this be illustrated by the procedure of the senses? What is it which gives mathematical knowledge a greater certainty than any other? What is observed of things whose excess is not judged by greater or smaller?

considerable, but not when it is minute, for want of some common measures, which, perhaps, may never come to be discovered. In these nice cases, supposing the acuteness of the sense equal, the greater attention and habit in such things will have the advantage. In the question about the tables, the marble-polisher will unquestionably determine the most accurately. But, notwithstanding this want of a common measure for settling many disputes relative to the senses and their representative the imagination, we find that the principles are the same in all, and that there is no disagreement until we come to examine into the pre-eminence or difference of things, which brings us within the province of the judgment.

— So long as we are conversant with the sensible qualities of things, hardly any more than the imagination seems concerned : little more, also, than the imagination seems concerned when the passions are represented, because, by the force of natural sympathy, they are felt in all men without any recourse to reasoning, and their justness recognized in every breast. Love, grief, fear, anger, joy, all these passions have in their turns affected every mind ; and they do not affect it in an arbitrary or casual manner, but upon certain natural, and uniform principles. But, as many of the works of imagination are not confined to the representation of sensible objects, nor to efforts upon the passions, but extend themselves to the manners, the characters, the actions, and designs of men, their relations,

In the question about the tables, why will the marble-polisher have the advantage? Notwithstanding the want of a common measure, &c., what do we find? So long as we are conversant with the sensible qualities of things, what only seems concerned? Why does the imagination only seem concerned when the passions are represented? What passions have in their turns affected every mind, and in what manner?



their virtues, and vices, they come within the province of the judgment, which is improved by attention and by the habit of reasoning. All these make a very considerable part of what are considered as the objects of taste; and Horace sends us to the schools of philosophy and the world for our instruction of them. Whatever certainty is to be acquired in morality and the science of life, just the same degree of certainty have we in what relates to them in works of imitation. Indeed, it is for the most part in our skill in manners, and in the observances of time, and place, and of decency in general, which is only to be learned in those schools to which Horace recommends us, that what is called taste, by way of distinction, consists; and which is, in reality, no other than a more refined judgment. On the whole, it appears to me that what is called taste, in its most general acceptation, is not a simple idea, but is partly made up of a perception of the primary pleasures of sense, of the secondary pleasures of the imagination, and of the conclusions of the reasoning faculty concerning the various relations of these, and concerning the human passions, manners, and actions. All this is requisite to form taste; and the groundwork of all these is the same in the human mind; for, as the senses are the great originals of all our ideas, and, consequently, of all our pleasures, if they are not uncertain and arbitrary, the whole groundwork of taste is common to all, and, therefore, there is a sufficient foundation for a conclusive reasoning on these matters.

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When do works of the imagination come within the province of the judgment? and how is it improved? Of what do all these make a very considerable part? Where does Horace send us for our instruction of them? In what does what is called taste, by way of distinction, consist? and what, in reality, is it? Of what is what is called taste, in its most general acceptation, made up? Why is all this requisite to form taste?

While we consider taste merely according to its nature and species, we shall find its principles entirely uniform ; but the degree in which these principles prevail in the several individuals of mankind, is altogether as different as the principles themselves are similar ; ~~for sensibility and judgment, which are the qualities that compose what we commonly call a taste, vary exceedingly in various people.~~ From a defect in the former of these qualities arises a want of taste ; a weakness in the latter constitutes a wrong or a bad one. There are some men formed with a feeling so blunt, with tempers so cold and phlegmatic, that they can hardly be said to be awake during the whole course of their lives. Upon such persons, the most striking objects make but a faint and obscure impression. There are others so continually in the agitation of gross and merely sensual pleasures, or so occupied in the low drudgery of avarice, or so heated in the chase of honors and distinction, that their minds, which had been used continually to the storms of these violent and tempestuous passions, can hardly be put in motion by the delicate and refined play of the imagination. These men, though from a different cause, become as stupid and insensible as the former ; but, whenever either of these happen to be struck with any natural elegance or greatness, or with these qualities in any work of art, they are moved upon the same principle.

The cause of a wrong taste is a defect of judgment ;

Why is the degree in which the principles of taste prevail as different as the principles themselves are similar ? From what does a want of taste arise ? What constitutes a wrong taste ? What is remarked of men formed with blunt feelings, and cold and phlegmatic tempers ? What is the nature of the impression produced on the minds of such men by the most striking objects ? What effect is produced on the minds of others by the groveling pursuits of life ? Under what circumstances are these two characters equally excited ?

and this may arise from a natural weakness of understanding, in whatever the strength of that faculty may consist; or, which is much more commonly the case, it may arise from a want of proper and well-directed exercise, which alone can make it strong and ready.

Besides, that ignorance, inattention, prejudice, rashness, levity, obstinacy, in short, all those passions, and all those vices, which pervert the judgment in other matters, prejudice it no less in this its more refined and elegant province. These causes produce different opinions upon every thing which is an object of the understanding, without inducing us to suppose that there are no settled principles of reason. And, indeed, on the whole, one may observe, that there is rather less difference upon matters of taste among mankind than upon most of those which depend upon the naked reason; and that men are far better agreed on the excellence of a description in Virgil than on the truth or falsehood of a theory of Aristotle.

A rectitude of judgment in the arts, which may be called a good taste, does, in a great measure, depend upon sensibility; because, if the mind has no bent to the pleasures of the imagination, it will never apply itself sufficiently to works of that species to acquire a competent knowledge in them. But, though a degree of sensibility is requisite to form a good judgment, yet a good judgment does not necessarily arise from a quick sensibility of pleasure: it frequently happens that a very poor judge, merely by force of a greater complexional sensibility, is more affected by a very

From what may a defect in the judgment arise? What farther contributes essentially toward it? On the whole, what may be observed? Why does a rectitude of judgment in the arts depend, in a great measure, upon sensibility? What evidence have we that a good judgment does not necessarily arise from a quick sensibility to pleasure?

poor piece than the best judge by the most perfect ; for, as every thing new, extraordinary, grand, or passionate, is well calculated to affect such a person, and that the faults do not affect him, his pleasure is more pure and unmixed ; and, as it is merely a pleasure of the imagination, it is much higher than any which is derived from a rectitude of the judgment : the judgment is, for the greater part, employed in throwing stumbling-blocks in the way of the imagination, in dissipating the scenes of its enchantment, and in tying us down to the disagreeable yoke of our reason ; for almost the only pleasure that men have in judging better than others consists in a sort of conscious pride and superiority, which arises from thinking rightly ; but, then, this is an indirect pleasure ; a pleasure which does not immediately result from the object which is under contemplation. In the morning of our days, when the senses are unworn and tender, when the whole man is awake in every part, and the gloss of novelty fresh upon all the objects that surround us, how lively at that time are our sensations, but how false and inaccurate the judgments we form of things ! I despair of ever receiving the same degree of pleasure, from the most excellent performances of genius, which I felt at that age from pieces which my present judgment regards as trifling and contemptible. Every trivial cause of pleasure is apt to affect the man of too sanguine a complexion : his appetite is too keen to suffer his taste to be delicate ; and he is, in all respects, what Ovid says of himself in love :

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How is the judgment for the greater part employed ? What is the nature of the pleasure that arises from superiority of judgment ? At what period are our sensations most lively ? What is said of the judgment we then form of things ? How is this illustrated from our author's experience ?

"Molle meum levibus cor est violabile telis,  
Et semper causa est, cur ego semper amem."

"My tender heart is violable by light weapons, and there is always a cause why I should be always in love."

One of this character can never be a refined judge; never what the comic poet calls *elegans formarum spectator*. The excellence and force of a composition must always be imperfectly estimated from its effect on the minds of any, except we know the temper and character of those minds. The most powerful effects of poetry and music have been displayed, and perhaps are still displayed, where these arts are but in a very low and imperfect state. The rude hearer is affected by the principles which operate in these arts, even in their rudest condition, and he is not skillful enough to perceive the defects. But, as arts advance toward their perfection, the science of criticism advances with equal pace, and the pleasure of judges is frequently interrupted by the faults which are discovered in the most finished compositions.

Before I leave this subject, I can not help taking notice of an opinion which many persons entertain, as if the taste were a separate faculty of the mind, and distinct from the judgment and imagination; a species of instinct by which we are struck naturally, and at the first glance, without any previous reasoning, with the excellences or the defects of a composition. So far as the imagination and the passions are concerned, I believe it true that the reason is little consulted; but where disposition, where decorum, where congruity are concerned, in short, wherever the best taste differs

Why can not a man whose mind is of too sanguine a complexion be a refined judge? Where have the most powerful effects of poetry and music been displayed? As arts and criticism advance, how is the pleasure of judges frequently interrupted? Of what opinion does our author take notice before he leaves this subject? What does he remark on this opinion?

from the worst, I am convinced that the understanding operates, and nothing else; and its operation is, in reality, far from being always sudden, or, when it is sudden, it is often far from being right. Men of the best taste by consideration come frequently to change these early and precipitate judgments, which the mind, from its aversion to neutrality and doubt, loves to form on the spot/ It is known that the taste, whatever it is, is improved exactly as we improve our judgment, by extending our knowledge, by a steady attention to our object, and by frequent exercise. They who have not taken these methods, if their taste decides quickly, it is always uncertainly; and their quickness is owing to their presumption and rashness, and not any hidden irradiation, that in a moment dispels all darkness from their minds. But they who have cultivated that species of knowledge which makes the object of taste, by degrees and habitually attain, not only a soundness, but a readiness of judgment, as men do by the same methods on all other occasions. At first they are obliged to spell, but at last they read with ease and with celerity; but this celerity of its operation is no proof that the taste is a distinct faculty. Nobody, I believe, has attended the course of a discussion which turned upon matters within the sphere of mere naked reason, but must have observed the extreme readiness with which the whole process of the argument is carried on, the grounds discovered, the objections raised and answered, and the conclusions drawn from premises, with a quickness altogether as great as the taste can be sup-

In what proportion is it known that the taste is improved? What is observed of persons who have not taken these methods, and of those who have? What must every man have observed who has attended the course of a discussion which turned upon matters within the sphere of reason alone?

posed to employ, and yet where nothing but plain reason either is or can be suspected to operate. To multiply principles for every different appearance is useless, and unphilosophical, too, in a high degree.

This matter might be pursued much farther; but it is not the extent of the subject which must prescribe our bounds; for what subject does not branch out to infinity? it is the nature of our particular scheme, and the single point of view in which we consider it, which ought to put a stop to our researches.

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Why is not this subject pursued still farther?

# PHILOSOPHICAL INQUIRY, ETC.

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## PART I.

### SECTION I.

#### NOVELTY.

THE first and the simplest emotion which we discover in the human mind is Curiosity. By curiosity I mean whatever desire we have for, or whatever pleasure we take in, novelty. We see children perpetually running from place to place, to hunt out something new: they catch with great eagerness, and with very little choice, at whatever comes before them: their attention is engaged by every thing, because every thing has, in that stage of life, the charm of novelty to recommend it. But as those things which engage us merely by their novelty can not attach us for any length of time, curiosity is the most superficial of all the affections: it changes its object perpetually: it has an appetite which is very sharp, but very easily satisfied; and it has always an appearance of giddiness, restlessness, and anxiety. Curiosity, from its nature, is a very active principle: it quickly runs over the greatest part of its objects, and soon exhausts the vari-

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What is the first and simplest emotion which we discover in the human mind? What is meant by it? How is it perceived in children? Why is curiosity the most superficial of all the affections? What evidence have we that it is a very active principle?



ety which is commonly to be met with in nature ; the same things make frequent returns, and they return with less and less of any agreeable effect. In short, the occurrences of life, by the time we come to know it a little, would be incapable of affecting the mind with any other sensations than those of loathing and weariness, if many things were not adapted to affect the mind by means of other powers besides novelty in them, and of other passions besides curiosity in ourselves. These powers and passions shall be considered in their place. But whatever these powers are, or upon what principle soever they affect the mind, it is absolutely necessary that they should not be exerted in those things which a daily vulgar use has brought into a stale, unaffecting familiarity. Some degree of novelty must be one of the materials in every instrument which works upon the mind ; and curiosity blends itself more or less with all our passions.

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## SECTION II.

### PAIN AND PLEASURE.

It seems, then, necessary, toward moving the passions of people advanced in life to any considerable degree, that the objects designed for that purpose, besides being in some measure new, should be capable of exciting pain or pleasure from other causes. Pain and pleasure are simple ideas, incapable of definition.

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Under what circumstances would the occurrences of life be incapable of affecting the mind with any other sensations than those of loathing and weariness ? In what things should these powers not be exerted, and why ?

What seems necessary toward moving the passions of people advanced in life ? What are pain and pleasure ?

People are not liable to be mistaken in their feelings, but they are very frequently wrong in the names they give them, and in their reasonings about them. Many are of opinion that pain arises necessarily from the removal of some pleasure, as they think pleasure does from the ceasing or diminution of some pain. For my part, I am rather inclined to imagine that pain and pleasure, in their most simple and natural manner of affecting, are each of a positive nature, and by no means necessarily dependent on each other for their existence. / The human mind is often, and I think it is for the most part, in a state neither of pain nor pleasure, which I call a state of indifference. When I am carried from this state into a state of actual pleasure, it does not appear necessary that I should pass through the medium of any sort of pain. If, in such a state of indifference, or ease, or tranquillity, or call it what you please, you were to be suddenly entertained with a concert of music; or suppose some object of a fine shape and bright, lively colors to be represented before you; or imagine your smell is gratified with the fragrance of a rose; or if, without any previous thirst, you were to drink of some pleasant kind of wine, or to taste of some sweatmeat without being hungry—in all the several senses of hearing, smelling, and tasting, you undoubtedly find a pleasure: yet, if I inquire into the state of your mind previous to these gratifications, you will hardly tell me that they found you in any kind of pain; or, having satisfied these several senses with

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About what are people liable to be mistaken? From what are many of opinion that pain arises? To what opinion does our author incline? For the most part, in what state is the human mind? and what is that state called? How can you illustrate that it is not necessary for the mind to be carried through any medium of pain in its passage from a state of *indifference to that of actual pleasure or actual pain?*

their several pleasures, will you say that any pain has succeeded, though the pleasure is absolutely over? Suppose, on the other hand, a man in the same state of indifference to receive a violent blow, or to drink of some bitter potion, or to have his ears wounded with some harsh and grating sound: here is no removal of pleasure; and yet here is felt, in every sense which is affected, a pain very distinguishable. It may be said, perhaps, that the pain, in these cases, had its rise from the removal of the pleasure which the man enjoyed before, though that pleasure was of so low a degree as to be perceived only by the removal. But this seems to me a subtlety that is not discoverable in nature. For if, previous to the pain, I do not feel any actual pleasure, I have no reason to judge that any such thing exists, since pleasure is only pleasure as it is felt. The same may be said of pain, and with equal reason. I can never persuade myself that pleasure and pain are mere relations, which can only exist as they are contrasted; but I think I can discern clearly that there are positive pains and pleasures, which do not at all depend upon each other. Nothing is more certain to my own feelings than this. There is nothing which I can distinguish in my mind with more clearness than the three states of indifference, of pleasure, and of pain. Every one of these I can perceive without any sort of idea of its relation to any thing else. Caius is afflicted with a fit of the colic; this man is actually in pain: stretch Caius upon the rack, he will feel a much greater pain: but does this pain of the rack

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How does it appear to be not true that the pain, in these cases, arose from the removal of the pleasure which the man enjoyed before? How does it appear that pleasure and pain are not mere relations? What illustration is given?

arise from the removal of any pleasure? or is the fit of the colic a pleasure or a pain just as we are pleased to consider it?

### SECTION III.

#### THE DIFFERENCE BETWEEN THE REMOVAL OF PAIN AND POSITIVE PLEASURE.

WE shall carry this proposition yet a step farther. We shall venture to propose that pain and pleasure are not only not necessarily dependent for their existence on their mutual diminution or removal, but that, in reality, the diminution or ceasing of pleasure does not operate like positive pain; and that the removal or diminution of pain, in its effect, has very little resemblance to positive pleasure.\* The former of these propositions; will, I believe, be much more readily allowed than the latter; because it is very evident that pleasure, when it has run its career, sets us down very nearly where it found us. Pleasure of every kind quickly satisfies; and when it is over, we relapse into indifference, or, rather, we fall into a soft tranquillity, which is tinged with the agreeable color of the former sensation. I own it is not, at first view, so apparent that the removal of a great pain does not resemble positive pleasure; but let us recollect in what state we

In carrying this proposition still farther, what does our author venture to propose? Why will the former of these propositions be more readily allowed than the latter? When pleasure of every kind is over, into what state do we relapse?

\* Mr. Locke [Essay on Human Understanding, l. ii., c. 20, sect. 16] thinks that the removal or lessening of a pain is considered and operates as a pleasure, and the loss or diminishing of pleasure is a pain. It is this opinion which we consider here.

have found our minds upon escaping some imminent danger, or on being released from the severity of some cruel pain. We have on such occasions found, if I am not much mistaken, the temper of our minds in a tenor very remote from that which attends the presence of positive pleasure; we have found them in a state of much sobriety, impressed with a sense of awe, in a sort of tranquillity shadowed with horror. The fashion of the countenance, and the gesture of the body, on such occasions, are so correspondent to this state of the mind, that any person, a stranger to the cause of the appearance, would rather judge us under some consternation than in the enjoyment of any thing like positive pleasure.

Ὡς δ' ὅταν ἀνδρὶ ἄτη πνεκινὴ λάβῃ, δοτ' ἐνὶ πάτρῃ  
 Φῶτα κατακτείνας, ἄλλων ἐξίκετο δῆμον,  
 Ἀνδρὸς ἐς ἀφνειοῦ, θάμβος δ' ἔχει εἰσορόωντας.

HOM., *Iliad*, xxiv., l. 490.

"As when a wretch, who, conscious of his crime,  
 Pursued for murder from his native clime,  
 Just gains some frontier, breathless, pale, amazed,  
 All gaze, all wonder!"

This striking appearance of the man whom Homer supposes to have just escaped an imminent danger, the sort of mixed passion of terror and surprise with which he affects the spectators, paints very strongly the manner in which we find ourselves affected upon occasions any way similar; for when we have suffered from any violent emotion, the mind naturally continues in something like the same condition, after the cause which first produced it has ceased to operate. The tossing

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How may it be made to appear that the removal of a great pain does not resemble positive pleasure? Give the example from Homer. What does *this striking appearance* of the man whom Homer supposes to have just escaped an imminent danger very strongly paint? and why?

of the sea remains after the storm ; and when this remain of horror has entirely subsided, all the passion which the accident raised subsides along with it, and the mind returns to its usual state of indifference. In short, pleasure (I mean any thing either in the inward sensation, or in the outward appearance, like pleasure from a positive cause) has never, I imagine, its origin from the removal of pain or danger.

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#### SECTION IV.

OF DELIGHT AND PLEASURE, AS OPPOSED TO EACH OTHER.

BUT shall we, therefore, say that the removal of pain, or its diminution, is always simply painful ? or affirm that the cessation or the lessening of pleasure is always attended itself with the pleasure ? ! By no means.

What I advance is no more than this : first, that there are pleasures and pains of a positive and independent nature ; and, secondly, that the feeling which results from the ceasing or diminution of pain does not bear a sufficient resemblance to positive pleasure to have it considered as of the same nature, or to entitle it to be known by the same name ; and, thirdly, that, upon the same principle, the removal or qualification of pleasure has no resemblance to positive pain. It is certain that

the former feeling (the removal or moderation of pain) has something in it far from distressing or disagreeable in its nature. This feeling, in many cases so agreeable, but in all so different from positive pleasure, has

How is this farther illustrated ? From what has pleasure never its origin ?

What are the three things here advanced ? How does it appear that the removal or moderation of pain is far from distressing us, or of being disagreeable in its nature ?

no name which I know ; but that hinders not its being a very real one, and very different from all others. It is most certain that every species of satisfaction or pleasure, how different soever in its manner of affecting, is of a positive nature in the mind of him who feels it. The affection is undoubtedly positive ; but the cause may be, as in this case it certainly is, a sort of *privation*. And it is very reasonable that we should distinguish, by some term, two things so distinct in nature, as a pleasure that is such simply, and without any relation, from that pleasure which can not exist without a relation, and that, too, a relation to pain. Very extraordinary it would be, if these affections, so distinguishable in their cause, so different in their effects, should be confounded with each other, because vulgar use has ranged them under the same general title. X Whenever I have occasion to speak of this species of relative pleasure, I call it *delight* ; and I shall take the best care I can to use that word in no other sense. I am satisfied the word is not commonly used in this appropriated signification ; but I thought it better to take up a word already known, and to limit its signification, than to introduce a new one, which would not, perhaps, incorporate so well with the language. I should never have presumed the least alteration in our words, if the nature of the language, framed for the purposes of business rather than those of philosophy, and the nature of my subject, that leads me out of the common track of discourse, did not, in a manner, necessitate me to it. I shall make use of this liberty with all possible

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What two things should be distinguished ? What would be very extraordinary ? What does our author call this species of relative pleasure ? and why ? Under what circumstances would he not have presumed this alteration ?

caution. As I make use of the word delight to express the sensation which accompanies the removal of pain or danger, so, when I speak of positive pleasure, I shall for the most part call it simply pleasure.

## SECTION V. >

### JOY AND GRIEF.

It must be observed, that the cessation of pleasure affects the mind in three ways. If it simply ceases after having continued a proper time, the effect is indifference; if it be abruptly broken off, there ensues an uneasy sense called disappointment; if the object be so totally lost that there is no chance of enjoying it again, a passion arises in the mind which is called grief. Now there is none of these, not even grief, which is the most violent, that I think has any resemblance to positive pain. The person who grieves, suffers his passion to grow upon him; he indulges it, he loves it; but this never happens in the case of actual pain, which no man ever willingly endured for any considerable time. That grief should be willingly endured, though far from a simply pleasing sensation, is not so difficult to be understood. It is the nature of grief to keep its object perpetually in its eye, to present it in its most pleasurable views, to repeat all the circumstances that attend it, even to the last minuteness; to go back to every particular enjoyment, to dwell upon each, and to find a thousand new perfections in all, that were not sufficiently understood before; in grief, the pleasure is

What distinction is to be observed between the words delight and pleasure?

In what three ways does the cessation of pleasure affect the mind? What difference is there between grief and pain? Why is it not difficult to understand how grief is willingly endured?



still uppermost; and the affliction we suffer has no resemblance to absolute pain, which is always odious, and which we endeavor to shake off as soon as possible. The Odyssey of Homer, which abounds with so many natural and affecting images, has none more striking than those which Menelaus raises of the calamitous fate of his friends, and his own manner of feeling it. He owns, indeed, that he often gives himself some intermission from such melancholy reflections; but he observes, too, that, melancholy as they are, they give him pleasure.

Ἄλλ' ἐμπης πάντας μὲν ὀδυρόμενος καὶ ἀχεύων,  
 Πολλῷκις ἐν μεγάροισι καθήμενος ἡμετέροισιν,  
 Ἄλλοτε μὲν τε γόῳ φρένα τέρπομαι, ἄλλοτε δ' αὖτε  
 Παύομαι. ἀψιπρὸς δὲ κόρος κρυεροῖο γόοιο.

"Still, in short intervals of *pleasing* us,  
 Regardful of the friendly dues I owe,  
 I to the glorious dead, forever dear,  
 Indulge the tribute of a *grateful* tear."—HOM., *Od.*, iv., l. 100.

On the other hand, when we recover our health, when we escape an imminent danger, is it with joy that we are affected? The sense, on these occasions, is far from that smooth and voluptuous satisfaction which the assured prospect of pleasure bestows. The delight which arises from the modifications of pain confesses the stock from whence it sprung, in its solid, strong, and severe nature.

## SECTION VI.

OF THE PASSIONS WHICH BELONG TO SELF-PRESERVATION.

Most of the ideas which are capable of making a

What example of the nature of grief is given from Homer's Odyssey? Recite it. When are we affected with joy? What is said of the sensation on these occasions? What is said of the delight which arises from the modifications of pain.

powerful impression on the mind, whether simply of pain or pleasure, or of the modifications of those, may be reduced very nearly to these two heads, *self-preservation* and *society*; to the ends of one or the other of which all our passions are calculated to answer. The passions which concern self-preservation turn mostly on *pain* or *danger*. The ideas of *pain*, *sickness*, and *death*, fill the mind with strong emotions of horror; but *life* and *health*, though they put us in a capacity of being affected with pleasure, they make no such impression by the simple enjoyment. The passions, therefore, which are conversant about the preservation of the individual, turn chiefly on *pain* and *danger*, and they are the most powerful of all the passions.

## SECTION VII.

### OF THE SUBLIME.

WHATEVER is fitted in any sort to excite the ideas of pain and danger; that is to say, whatever is in any sort terrible, or is conversant about terrible objects, or operates in a manner analogous to terror, is a source of the *sublime*; that is, it is productive of the strongest emotion which the mind is capable of feeling. I say the strongest emotion, because I am satisfied that the ideas of pain are much more powerful than those which enter on the part of pleasure. Without doubt, the tor-

To what two heads may most of the ideas which are capable of making an impression on the mind be reduced? On what do the passions which concern self-preservation turn? What ideas fill the mind with strong emotions of horror? What is said of life and health? Which are the passions, therefore, that are conversant about the preservation of the individual? and what is said of them?

What is a source of the sublime? and why? Why does our author consider it the strongest emotion that the mind is capable of feeling?

ments which we may be made to suffer are much greater in their effect on the body and mind than any pleasures which the most learned voluptuary could suggest, or than the liveliest imagination, and the most sound and exquisitely sensible body, could enjoy. Nay, I am in great doubt whether any man could be found who would earn a life of the most perfect satisfaction, at the price of ending it in the torments which justice inflicted in a few hours on the late unfortunate regicide in France. But, as pain is stronger in its operation than pleasure, so death is, in general, a much more affecting idea than pain; because there are very few pains, however exquisite, which are not preferred to death; nay, what generally makes pain itself, if I may say so, more painful, is, that it is considered as an emissary of this kind of terrors. When danger or pain presses too nearly, it is incapable of giving any delight, and is simply terrible; but at certain distances, and with certain modifications, it may be, and it is delightful, as we every day experience. The cause of this I shall endeavor to investigate hereafter.

## SECTION VIII.

### OF THE PASSIONS WHICH BELONG TO SOCIETY.

THE other head under which I class our passions is that of *society*, which may be divided into two sorts:

1. The society of the sexes; and, 2. That more *general*

How is this illustrated? What example is given? Why may death be considered a much more affecting idea than pain? What is it that makes pain itself, if possible, more painful? What is remarked of danger or pain when it presses too nearly? and when it is at a distance?

*What is the other head under which our passions are classed? and how may it be divided?*

society which we have with men and with other animals, and which we may in some sort be said to have even with the inanimate world. The passions which belong to the preservation of the individual turn wholly on pain and danger: those which belong to the society of the sexes have their origin in gratifications and pleasures. When men describe in what manner they are affected by pain and danger, they do not dwell on the pleasure of health and the comfort of security, and then lament the *loss* of these satisfactions: the whole turns upon the actual pains and horrors which they endure. But if you listen to the complaints of a forsaken lover, you observe that he insists largely on the pleasures which he enjoyed, or hoped to enjoy, and on the perfection of the object of his desires: it is the loss which is always uppermost in his mind. The violent effects produced by love, which has sometimes been even wrought up to madness, is no objection to the rule which we seek to establish. When men have suffered their imaginations to be long affected with any idea, it so wholly engrosses them as to shut out, by degrees, almost every other, and to break down every partition of the mind which would confine it. Any idea is sufficient for the purpose, as is evident from the infinite variety of causes which give rise to madness; but this, at most, can only prove that the passion of love is capable of producing very extraordinary effects, not that its extraordinary emotions have any connection with positive pain.

On what do the passions turn which belong to the preservation of the individual? In what have those their origin which belong to the society of the sexes? How do men describe the manner in which they are affected by pain and danger? In listening to the complaints of a forsaken lover, what do we observe? What is no objection to the rule which we seek to establish? How is this illustrated? How does it appear evident that *any idea is sufficient for this purpose?* and what only does this prove?

## SECTION IX:

## OF BEAUTY.

MR. ADDISON supposes that the preference given by brutes to their own species arises from some sense of beauty which they found in them; but I imagine that it arises from a law of some other kind, to which they are subject; and this we may fairly conclude from their apparent want of choice among those objects to which the barriers of their own species have confined them. But man, who is a creature adapted to a greater variety and intricacy of relation, connects with the general passion the idea of some *social* qualities, which direct and heighten the appetite which he has in common with all other animals; and as he is not designed, like them, to live at large, it is fit that he should have something to create a preference, and fix his choice; and this, in general, should be some sensible quality, as no other can so quickly, so powerfully, or so surely, produce its effect. The object, therefore, of this mixed passion, which we call love, is the *beauty* of the sex. Men are attached to the sex in general, as is the sex, and by the common law of nature; but they are attached to particulars by personal beauty. I call beauty a social quality; for where men and women, and not only they, but when other animals give us a sense of joy and pleasure in beholding them (and

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From what does Mr. Addison suppose the preference to arise which is given by brutes to their own species? How does it appear evident that it arises from a law of some other kind? With the general passion what does man connect? Why should he have something to create a preference? Why should this be some sensible quality? What is this mixed passion called, and what is its object? By what law are men attached to the sex in general? By what are they attached to particular individuals? Why do we call this social quality beauty?

there are many that do so), they inspire us with sentiments of tenderness and affection toward their persons; we like to have them near us, and we enter willingly into a kind of relation with them, unless we should have strong reasons to the contrary. But to what end, in many cases, this was designed, I am unable to discover; for I see no greater reason for a connection between man and several animals who are attired in so engaging a manner, than between him and some others who entirely want this attraction, or possess it in a far weaker degree. But it is probable that Providence did not make even this distinction, but with a view to some great end, though we can not perceive distinctly what it is, as his wisdom is not our wisdom, nor our ways his ways.

## SECTION X.

### SOCIETY AND SOLITUDE.

X THE second branch of the social passions is that which administers to *society in general*. With regard to this, I observe, that society, merely as society, without any particular heightenings, gives to us no positive pleasure in the enjoyment; but absolute and entire solitude, that is, the total and perpetual exclusion from all society, is as great a positive pain as can almost be conceived. - Therefore, in the balance between the pleasure of general *society* and the pain of absolute solitude, *pain* is the predominant idea. But the pleas-

Why are we not able to discover to what end this was designed? For what end is it probable that Providence made this distinction?

What is the second branch of the social passions? With regard to this what is observed? What, therefore, is the predominant idea in the balance between the pleasure of general society and the pain of absolute solitude?

ure of any particular social enjoyment outweighs very considerably the uneasiness caused by the want of that particular enjoyment ; so that the strongest sensations, relative to the habitudes of *particular society*, are sensations of pleasure. Good company, lively conversation, and the endearments of friendship, fill the mind with great pleasure ; a temporary solitude, on the other hand, is itself agreeable. This may, perhaps, prove that we are creatures designed for contemplation as well as action ; since solitude as well as society has its pleasures ; as, from the former observation, we may discern that an entire life of solitude contradicts the purposes of our being, since death itself is scarcely an idea of more terror.

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## SECTION XI.

### SYMPATHY, IMITATION, AND AMBITION.

UNDER this denomination of society the passions are of a complicated kind, and branch out into a variety of forms agreeable to that variety of ends which they are to serve in the great chain of society. The three principal links in this chain are *sympathy*, *imitation*, and *ambition*.

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## SECTION XII.

### SYMPATHY.

It is by the first of these passions that we enter into Why are the sensations of pleasure the strongest sensations relative to the habitudes of particular society ? What is the effect of good company, lively conversation, and the endearments of friendship ? And of a temporary solitude ? What may this prove, and why ?

Under this denomination of society, what is remarked of the passions ? What are the three principal links of this chain ?

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the concerns of others ; that we are moved as they are moved, and are never suffered to be indifferent spectators of any thing which men can do or suffer. For sympathy must be considered as a sort of substitution, by which we are put into the place of another man, and affected, in many respects, as he is affected : so that this passion may either partake of the nature of those which regard self-preservation, and, turning upon pain, may be a source of the sublime ; or it may turn upon ideas of pleasure ; and then, whatever has been said of the social affections, whether they regard society in general, or only some particular modes of it, may be applicable here. It is by this principle chiefly that poetry, painting, and other affecting arts transfuse their passions from one breast to another, and are often capable of grafting a delight on wretchedness, misery, and death itself. It is a common observation, that objects which in the reality would shock, are in tragical, and such like representations, the source of a very high species of pleasure. This, taken as a fact, has been the cause of much reasoning. The satisfaction has been commonly attributed, first, to the comfort we receive in considering that so melancholy a story is no more than a fiction ; and, next, to the contemplation of our own freedom from the evils which we see represented. I am afraid it is a practice much too common in inquiries of this nature, to attribute the cause of feelings which merely arise from the mechanical structure of our bodies, or from the natural frame and

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What is the influence of sympathy, and why ? Of what may this passion partake ? By this principle, what influence have poetry, painting, and other affecting arts ? What common observation is here noticed ? Of what has this been the cause ? To what has the satisfaction commonly been attributed ? What practice is much too common in inquiries of this nature, and why ?



constitution of our minds, to certain conclusions of the reasoning faculty on the objects presented to us; for I should imagine that the influence of reason, in producing our passions, is not near so extensive as it is commonly believed.

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### SECTION XIII.

#### THE EFFECTS OF SYMPATHY IN THE DISTRESSES OF OTHERS.

To examine this point concerning the effect of tragedy in a proper manner, we must previously consider how we are affected by the feelings of our fellow-creatures in circumstances of real distress. I am convinced we have a degree of delight, and that no small one, in the real misfortunes and pains of others: for, let the affection be what it will in appearance, if it does not make us shun some objects, if, on the contrary, it induces us to approach them, if it makes us dwell upon them, in this case I conceive we must have a delight or pleasure of some species or other in contemplating objects of this kind. Do we not read the authentic histories of scenes of this nature with as much pleasure as romances or poems, where the incidents are fictitious? The prosperity of no empire, nor the grandeur of any king, can so agreeably affect in the reading, as the ruin of the state of Macedon, and the distress of its unhappy prince. Such a catastrophe touches us in history as much as the destruction of Troy does in fable. Our delight, in cases of this kind, is very greatly

To examine this point concerning the effect of tragedy in a proper manner, what must we previously consider? Of what is our author convinced, and why? How is this illustrated? By what is our delight, in cases of this kind, very greatly heightened?

heightened, if the sufferer be some excellent person who sinks under an unworthy fortune. Scipio and Cato are both virtuous characters; but we are more deeply affected by the violent death of the one, and the ruin of the great cause to which he adhered, than with the deserved triumphs and uninterrupted prosperity of the other; for terror is a passion which always produces delight when it does not press too closely; and pity is a passion accompanied with pleasure, because it arises from love and social affection. Whenever we are formed by nature to any active purpose, the passion which animates us to it is attended with delight, or a pleasure of some kind, let the subject-matter be what it will; and as our Creator has designed we should be united by the bond of sympathy, he has strengthened that bond by a proportionable delight; and there most where our sympathy is most wanted, in the distresses of others. If this passion were simply painful, we would shun with the greatest care all persons and places that could excite such a passion; as some, who are so far gone in indolence as not to endure any strong impression, actually do. But the case is widely different with the greater part of mankind; there is no spectacle we so eagerly pursue as that of some uncommon and grievous calamity; so that, whether the misfortune is before our eyes, or whether they are turned back to it in history, it always touches with delight. This is not an unmingled delight, but blended with no

What examples are given? When does terror produce delight? and why is pity accompanied with pleasure? Whenever we are formed by nature for any active purpose, with what is the passion which animates us to it attended? As our Creator has designed we should be united by the bond of sympathy, how has he strengthened that bond? and where most? If this passion were simply painful, how would it affect us? What spectacle do we most eagerly pursue? How are we affected, whether the spectacle is present or past? With what is this delight blended?

small uneasiness. The delight we have in such things hinders us from shunning scenes of misery; and the pain we feel prompts us to relieve ourselves in relieving those who suffer; and all this antecedent to any reasoning, by an instinct that works us to its own purposes without our concurrence.

## SECTION XIV.

### OF THE EFFECTS OF TRAGEDY.

It is thus in real calamities. In imitated distresses, the only difference is the pleasure resulting from the effects of imitation; for it is never so perfect but we can perceive it is imitation, and on that principle are somewhat pleased with it. And, indeed, in some cases we derive as much or more pleasure from that source than from the thing itself. But then, I imagine, we shall be much mistaken if we attribute any considerable part of our satisfaction in tragedy to the consideration that tragedy is a deceit, and its representations no realities. The nearer it approaches the reality, and the farther it removes us from all idea of fiction, the more perfect is its power. But be its power of what kind it may, it never approaches to what it represents. Choose a day on which to represent the most sublime and affecting tragedy we have; appoint the most fa-

Why does the delight we have in such things hinder us from shunning scenes of misery?

What is the difference, in their effect, between real calamities and imitated distresses? and why? What degree of pleasure do we, in some cases, derive from that source? Why shall we be much mistaken if we attribute any considerable part of our satisfaction in tragedy to the consideration that tragedy is a deceit, and its representations no realities? How is the remark illustrated, that, be its power what it may, it never approaches to what it represents?

vorite actors ; spare no cost upon the scenes and decorations ; unite the greatest efforts of poetry, painting, and music ; and when you have collected your audience, just at the moment when their minds are erect with expectation, let it be reported that a state criminal of high rank is on the point of being executed in the adjoining square ; in a moment the emptiness of the theatre would demonstrate the comparative weakness of the imitative arts, and proclaim the triumph of the real sympathy. I believe that this notion of our having a simple pain in the reality, yet a delight in the representation, arises from hence—that we do not sufficiently distinguish what we would by no means choose to do, from what we would be eager enough to see if it were once done. (We delight in seeing things which, so far from doing, our heartiest wishes would be to see redressed.) This noble capital, the pride of England and of Europe, I believe no man is so strangely wicked as to desire to see destroyed by a conflagration or an earthquake, though he should be removed himself to the greatest distance from the danger. But suppose such a fatal accident to have happened, what numbers from all parts would crowd to behold the ruins, and among them many who would have been content never to have seen London in its glory! Nor is it, in either real or fictitious distresses, our immunity from them which produces our delight ; in my own mind I can discover nothing like it. I apprehend that this mistake is owing to a sort of sophism by which we are frequently imposed upon ; it arises

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From what does the notion that we have a simple pain in the reality, and yet a delight in the representation, arise ? In seeing what things do we delight ? How is this illustrated ? What can not our author in his own mind discover ? To what sort of a sophism is this mistake owing ?

from our not distinguishing between what is indeed a necessary condition to our doing or suffering any thing in general, and what is the cause of some particular act. If a man kills me with a sword, it is a necessary condition to this that we should have been both of us alive before the fact; and yet it would be absurd to say that our being both living creatures was the cause of his crime and of my death. So it is certain, that it is absolutely necessary my life should be out of any imminent hazard before I can take a delight in the sufferings of others, real or imaginary, or, indeed, in any thing else, from any cause whatsoever. But then it is a sophism to argue from thence that this immunity is the cause of my delight either on these or on any occasions. No one can distinguish such a cause of satisfaction in his own mind, I believe; nay, when we do not suffer any very acute pain, nor are exposed to any imminent danger of our lives, we can feel for others while we suffer ourselves; and often, then, most when we are softened by affliction, we see with pity even distresses which we would accept in the place of our own.

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## SECTION XV.

### IMITATION.

THE second passion which belongs to society is imitation, or, if you will, a desire of imitating, and, con-

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How is this illustrated? What follows? What argument from thence would be a sophism? When can we feel for others while we suffer ourselves? When do we see with pity even distresses which we would accept in the place of our own?

What is the second passion that belongs to society?

tly, a pleasure in it. This passion arises from the same cause with sympathy; for, as sympathy makes us take concern in whatever men feel, so affection prompts us to copy whatever they do; consequently, we have a pleasure in imitating, whatever belongs to imitation, merely as it is without any intervention of the reasoning faculty, solely from our natural constitution, which Providence has framed in such a manner as to find either pleasure or delight, according to the nature of the object, whatever regards the purposes of our being. Imitation, far more than by precept, that we learn every thing; and what we learn thus, we acquire more effectually, but more pleasantly. This regulates our manners, our opinions, our lives. It is one of the strongest links of society; it is a species of compliance which all men yield to each other, it is a constraint to themselves, and which is extreme-ly pleasing to all. Herein it is that painting, and many agreeable arts, have laid one of the principal foundations of their power. And since, by its influence on our manners and our passions, it is of so great consequence, I shall here venture to lay down a rule, which may inform us, with a good degree of certainty, how we are to attribute the power of the arts to imitation, or to our pleasure in the skill of the imitator, or to sympathy, or some other cause in conjunction with it. When the object represented in poetry or painting is such as we could have no de-

as it appear that this passion arises from much the same cause as sympathy? What advantage has imitation over precept, in the acquisition of knowledge? What does it form? Why is it considered one of the strongest links of society? What have laid one of the principal foundations of their power in it? What rule does our author here lay down, and repeat it.

sire of seeing in the reality, then I may be sure that its power in poetry or painting is owing to the power of imitation, and to no cause operating in the thing itself. So it is with most of the pieces which the painters call still-life. In these, a cottage, a dunghill, the meanest and most ordinary utensils of the kitchen, are capable of giving us pleasure. But when the object of the painting or poem is such as we should run to see if real, let it affect us with what odd sort of sense it may, we may rely upon it that the power of the poem or picture is more owing to the nature of the thing itself, than to the mere effect of imitation, or to a consideration of the skill of the imitator, however excellent. Aristotle has spoken so much and so solidly upon the force of imitation in his Poetics, that it makes any farther discourse upon this subject the less necessary.

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## SECTION XVI.

### AMBITION.

ALTHOUGH imitation is one of the great instruments used by Providence in bringing our nature toward its perfection, yet if men gave themselves up to imitation entirely, and each followed the other, and so on in an eternal circle, it is easy to see that there never could be any improvement among them. Men must remain as brutes do, the same at the end that they are at this day, and that they were in the beginning of the world. To prevent this, God has planted in man a sense of

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What is it that makes any farther discourse on this subject unnecessary?

What would be the consequence if men gave themselves up entirely to imitation? To prevent this, what sense has God planted in man?

ambition, and a satisfaction arising from the contemplation of his excelling his fellows in something deemed valuable among them. It is this passion that drives men to all the ways we see in use of signalizing themselves, and that tends to make whatever excites in a man the idea of this distinction so very pleasant. It has been so strong as to make very miserable men take comfort that they were supreme in misery; and certain it is, that where we can not distinguish ourselves by something excellent, we begin to take a complacency in some singular infirmities, follies, or defects of one kind or other. It is on this principle that flattery is so prevalent; for flattery is no more than what raises in a man's mind an idea of a preference which he has not. Now whatever, either upon good or upon bad grounds, tends to raise a man in his own opinion, produces a sort of swelling and triumph that is extremely grateful to the human mind; and this swelling is never more perceived, nor operates with more force, than when without danger we are conversant with terrible objects, the mind always claiming to itself some part of the dignity and importance of the things which it contemplates. Hence proceeds what Longinus has observed of that glorying and sense of inward greatness, that always fills the reader of such passages in poets and orators as are sublime; it is what every man must have felt in himself upon such occasions.

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To what does this passion drive men? To what extent has it been carried? and what is certain? On this principle, what is prevalent, and why? What is the effect of whatever tends to raise a man in his own opinion? When is it most perceived? Hence what proceeds?



## SECTION XVII.

## THE RECAPITULATION.

To draw the whole of what has been said into a few distinct points: The passions which belong to self-preservation turn on pain and danger; they are simply painful when their causes immediately affect us; they are delightful when we have an idea of pain and danger, without being actually in such circumstances; this delight I have not called pleasure, because it turns on pain, and because it is different enough from any idea of positive pleasure. Whatever excites this delight, I call sublime. The passions which belong to self-preservation are the strongest of all the passions.

The second head to which the passions are referred, with relation to their final cause, is society. There are two sorts of societies: The first is, the society of sex. The passion which belongs to this is called love, and its object is the beauty of women. The other is the great society with man and all other animals. The passions subservient to this is called, likewise, love, and its object is beauty, which is a name I shall apply to all such qualities in things as induce in us a sense of affection and tenderness, or some other passion the most nearly resembling these. The passion of love has its rise in positive pleasure; it is, like all things which grow out of pleasure, capable of being mixed

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When are the passions which belong to self-preservation simply painful? and when are they delightful? Why is not this delight called pleasure? What is whatever excites this delight called? Which are the strongest of all the passions? What is the second head to which the passions are referred? How many sorts of society are there? What is the first? What is the passion belonging to it called? and what is its object? What is the other sort of society? What is the passion subservient to this called? and what is its object? How extensively is it applied? In what has the *passion of love its rise*? and what is it like?

with a mode of uneasiness, that is, when an idea of its object is excited in the mind, with an idea, at the same time, of having irretrievably lost it. This mixed sense of pleasure I have not called *pain*, because it turns upon actual pleasure, and because it is, both in its cause and in most of its effects, of a nature altogether different.

Next to the general passion we have for society, to a choice in which we are directed by the pleasure we have in the object, the particular passion under this head, called sympathy, has the greatest extent. The nature of this passion is, to put us in the place of another in whatever circumstance he is in, and to affect us in a like manner; so that this passion may, as the occasion requires, turn either on pain or pleasure, but with the modifications mentioned in some cases in section x. As to imitation and preference, nothing more need be said.

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## SECTION XVIII.

### THE CONCLUSION.

I BELIEVE that an attempt to range and methodize some of our most leading passions would be a good preparative to such an inquiry as we are going to make in the ensuing discourse. The passions which I have mentioned are almost the only ones that it can be ne-

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Why is not this mixed sense of pleasure called pain? Next to the general passion we have for society, what particular passion has the greatest extent? and what is its nature? On what, consequently, may this passion turn?

What would be a good preparative to such an inquiry as we are going to make in the ensuing discourse? What is remarked on the passions already mentioned? and also on the variety of the passions?

cessary to consider in our present design, though the variety of the passions is great, and worthy, in every branch of that variety, of an attentive investigation. The more accurately we search into the human mind, the stronger traces we every where find of His wisdom who made it. If a discourse on the use of the parts of the body may be considered as a hymn to the Creator, the use of the passions, which are the organs of the mind, can not be barren of praise to him, nor unproductive to ourselves of that noble and uncommon union of science and admiration which a contemplation of the works of infinite wisdom alone can afford to a rational mind; while, referring to him whatever we find of right, or good, or fair in ourselves, discovering his strength and wisdom even in our own weakness and imperfection, honoring them where we discover them clearly, and adoring their profundity where we are lost in our search, we may be inquisitive without impertinence, and elevated without pride; we may be admitted, if I may dare to say so, into the counsels of the Almighty by a consideration of his works. The elevation of the mind ought to be the principal end of all our studies, which if they do not in some measure effect, they are of very little service to us. But, besides this great purpose, a consideration of the rationale of our passions seems to me very necessary for all who would affect them upon solid and sure principles. It is not enough to know them in general: to affect them after a delicate manner, or to judge properly of

By searching accurately into the human mind, traces of what do we find? If a discourse on the use of the parts of the body may be considered as a hymn to the Creator, what inferences are drawn with regard to the passions? What should be the principal end of all our studies? Besides this great purpose, what consideration seems necessary? To affect the passions after a delicate manner, or to judge properly of any work designed to affect them, what knowledge of them is necessary?

any work designed to affect them, we should know the exact boundaries of their several jurisdictions; we should pursue them through all their variety of operations, and pierce into the inmost, and what might appear inaccessible parts of our nature:

"Quod latet arcana non enarrabile fibra."

"That which can not be described lies concealed in the secret fibres."

Without all this, it is possible for a man, after a confused manner, sometimes to satisfy his own mind of the ruth of his work; but he can never have a certain determinate rule to go by, nor can he ever make his propositions sufficiently clear to others. Poets, and orators, and painters, and those who cultivate other branches of the liberal arts, have, without this critical knowledge, succeeded well in their several provinces, and will succeed; as among artificers there are many machines made, and even invented, without any exact knowledge of the principles by which they are governed. It is, I own, not uncommon to be wrong in theory and right in practice; and we are happy that it is so. Men often act right from their feelings, who afterward reason but ill on them from principle; but, as it is impossible to avoid an attempt at such reasoning, and equally impossible to prevent its having some influence on our practice, surely it is worth taking some pains to have it just, and founded on the basis of sure experience. We might expect that the artists themselves would have been our surest guides; but the artists have been too much occupied in the practice: the

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What is the disadvantage of not possessing that knowledge? Why, then, have poets, orators, and painters succeeded well in their several provinces? How is the remark illustrated, that though we are sometimes wrong in theory, we are right in practice? Why is it necessary to have our reasoning just, and founded on the basis of experience? Why have artists, philosophers, and critics failed on this subject?

philosophers have done little; and what they have done was mostly with a view to their own schemes and systems; and as for those called critics, they have generally sought the rule of the arts in the wrong place: they sought it among poems, pictures, engravings, statues, and buildings; but art can never give the rules that make an art. This is, I believe, the reason why (artists in general, and poets principally, have been confined in so narrow a circle; they have been rather imitators of one another than of nature; and this with so faithful a uniformity, and to so remote an antiquity, that it is hard to say who gave the first model. Critics follow them, and therefore can do little as guides. I can judge but poorly of any thing while I measure it by no other standard than itself. The true standard of the arts is in every man's power; and an easy observation of the most common, sometimes of the meanest things in nature, will give the truest lights, where the greatest sagacity and industry that slights such observation must leave us in the dark, or, what is worse, amuse and mislead us by false lights. In an inquiry, it is almost every thing to be once in a right road. I am satisfied I have done but little by these observations considered in themselves; and I never should have taken the pains to digest them, much less should I have ever ventured to publish them, if I were not convinced that nothing tends more to the corruption of science than to suffer it to stagnate. These waters must be troubled before they can exert their virtues.

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Why have poets particularly been confined to so narrow a circle? Why can critics do little as guides? When can we judge but poorly of any thing? How is the remark illustrated that the true standard of the arts is in every man's power? In an inquiry, what is almost every thing? Why was our author induced to publish these observations?

A man who works beyond the surface of things, though he may be wrong himself, yet he clears the way for others, and may chance to make even his errors subservient to the cause of truth. In the following parts I shall inquire what things they are that cause in us the affections of the sublime and beautiful, as in this I have considered the affections themselves. I only desire one favor, that no part of this discourse may be judged of by itself, and independently of the rest; for I am sensible I have not disposed my materials to abide the test of a captious controversy, but of a sober and even forgiving examination; that they are not armed at all points for battle, but dressed to visit those who are willing to give a peaceful entrance to truth.

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What is said of the man who works beyond the surface of things? In the following parts, what is to be the subject of inquiry? What has been considered in this? Why does our author desire that no part of this discourse may be judged of by itself, and independently of the rest?

## PART II.

## SECTION I.

OF THE PASSION CAUSED BY THE SUBLIME.

THE passion caused by the great and sublime in nature, when those causes operate most powerfully, is astonishment; and astonishment is that state of the soul in which all its motions are suspended with some degree of horror.\* In this case, the mind is so entirely filled with its object, that it can not entertain any other, nor, by consequence, reason on that object which employs it. Hence arises the great power of the sublime, that, far from being produced by them, it anticipates our reasonings, and hurries us on by an irresistible force. Astonishment, as I have said, is the effect of the sublime in its highest degree; the inferior effects are admiration, reverence, and respect.

## SECTION II.

TERROR.

No passion so effectually robs the mind of all its powers of acting and reasoning as fear;† for fear be-

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What is the passion caused by the great and sublime in nature, when those causes operate most powerfully? What is meant by astonishment? To what extent is the mind, in this state, filled with its object? Hence what arises? Astonishment being the effect of the sublime in its highest degree, what are its inferior effects?

Why does fear effectually rob the mind of all its powers? ..

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\* Part i., sect. iii., iv., vii.

† Part iv., sect. iii., iv., v., vi.

ing an apprehension of pain or death, it operates in a manner that resembles actual pain. Whatever, therefore, is terrible with regard to sight, is sublime too, whether this cause of terror be endued with greatness of dimensions or not; for it is impossible to look on any thing as trifling or contemptible that may be dangerous. There are many animals that, though far from being large, are yet capable of raising ideas of the sublime, because they are considered as objects of terror; as serpents and poisonous animals of almost all kinds. And to things of great dimensions, if we annex an adventitious idea of terror, they become without comparison greater. A level plain of a vast extent on land is certainly no mean idea; the prospect of such a plain may be as extensive as a prospect of the ocean, but can it ever fill the mind with any thing so great as the ocean itself? This is owing to several causes; but it is owing to none more than to this, that this ocean is an object of no small terror. Indeed, terror is, in all cases whatsoever, either more openly or latently the ruling principle of the sublime. Several languages bear a strong testimony to the affinity of these ideas. They frequently use the same word to signify indifferently the modes of astonishment or admiration, and those of terror. *θαμβός* is, in Greek, either fear or wonder; *δεινός* is terrible or respectable; *αιδεω*, to reverence or to fear. *Vereor* in Latin is what *αιδεω* is in Greek. The Romans used the verb *stupco*, a term

Why is whatever is terrible with regard to sight sublime also? Why are many animals that are far from being large capable of raising ideas of the sublime? What examples? What is the consequence, if we annex to things of great dimension the adventitious idea of terror? What is observed, of a level plain and of the ocean? How does our author make it appear evident that terror is in all cases, either more openly or latently, the ruling principle of the sublime?



which strongly marks the state of an astonished mind, to express the effect either of simple fear or of astonishment: the word *attonitus* (thunderstruck) is equally expressive of the alliance of these ideas; and do not the French *étonnement*, and the English *astonishment* and *amazement*, point out as clearly the kindred emotions which attend fear and wonder? They who have a more general knowledge of languages could produce, I make no doubt, many other and equally striking examples.

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### SECTION III.

#### OBSCURITY.

To make any thing very terrible, obscurity\* seems, in general, to be necessary. When we know the full extent of any danger, when we can accustom our eyes to it, a great deal of the apprehension vanishes. Every one will be sensible of this who considers how greatly night adds to our dread in all cases of danger, and how much the notions of ghosts and goblins, of which none can form clear ideas, affect minds which give credit to the popular tales concerning such sorts of beings. Those despotic governments which are founded on the passions of men, and principally upon the passion of fear, keep their chief as much as may be from the public eye. The policy has been the same in many cases of religion. Almost all the heathen temples were dark. Even in the barbarous temples of the Ameri-

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Why does obscurity seem, in general, necessary to make any thing very terrible? How may every one be sensible of this? Illustrate this remark from despotic governments, and from heathen worship.

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\* Part iv., sect. xiv., xv., xvi.

cans, at this day, they keep their idol in a dark part of the hut which is consecrated to his worship. For this purpose, too, the Druids performed all their ceremonies in the bosom of the darkest woods, and in the shade of the oldest and most spreading oaks. No person seems better to have understood the secret of heightening, or of setting terrible things, if I may use the expression, in their strongest light, by the force of a judicious obscurity, than Milton. His description of Death, in the second book, is admirably studied: it is astonishing with what a gloomy pomp, with what a significant and expressive uncertainty of strokes and coloring, he has finished the portrait of the king of terrors:

"The other shape,  
If shape it might be call'd that shape had none  
Distinguishable, in member, joint, or limb;  
Or substance might be call'd that shadow seem'd,  
For each seem'd either, black he stood as night;  
Fierce as ten furies; terrible as hell;  
And shook a deadly dart. What seem'd his head  
The likeness of a kingly crown had on."

In this description all is dark, uncertain, confused, terrible, and sublime to the last degree.

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## SECTION IV.

### OF THE DIFFERENCE BETWEEN CLEARNESS AND OBSCURITY WITH REGARD TO THE PASSIONS.

It is one thing to make an idea clear, and another to make it *affecting* to the imagination. If I make a

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What is observed of Milton, and of his description of death? Repeat it  
What is said of it?

How is the observation illustrated, that it is one thing to make an idea  
clear, and another to make it affecting to the imagination?

drawing of a palace, or a temple, or a landscape, I present a very clear idea of those objects ; but then (allowing for the effect of imitation, which is something) my picture can at most affect only as the palace, temple, or landscape would have affected in the reality. On the other hand, the most lively and spirited verbal description I can give raises a very obscure and imperfect *idea* of such objects ; but then it is in my power to raise a stronger *emotion* by the description than I could do by the best painting. This experience constantly evinces. The proper manner of conveying the affections of the mind from one to another is by words : there is a great insufficiency in all other methods of communication ; and so far is a clearness of imagery from being absolutely necessary to an influence upon the passions, that they may be considerably operated upon, without presenting any image at all, by certain sounds adapted to that purpose ; of which we have a sufficient proof in the acknowledged and powerful effects of instrumental music. In reality, a clearness helps but little toward affecting the passions, as it is in some sort an enemy to all enthusiasm whatsoever.

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## SECTION V.

### THE SAME SUBJECT CONTINUED.

THERE are two verses in Horace's Art of Poetry that seem to contradict this opinion ; for which reason

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What is observed of the most lively and spirited verbal description ? How is it illustrated that the proper manner of conveying the affections of the mind from one to another is by words ? Why does great clearness help but little toward affecting the passions ?

I shall take a little more pains to clear it up. The verses are,

"Segnius irritant animos demissa per aures,  
Quam quæ sunt oculis subjecta fidelibus."

"The mind is less easily excited through the ear than through the eye."

On this the Abbé du Bos founds a criticism, wherein he gives painting the preference to poetry in the article of moving the passions, principally on account of the greater *clearness* of the ideas it represents. I believe this excellent judge was led into this mistake (if it be a mistake) by his system, to which he found it more conformable than I imagine it will be found by experience. I know several who admire and love painting, and yet who regard the objects of their admiration in that art with coolness enough in comparison of that warmth with which they are animated by affecting pieces of poetry or rhetoric. Among the common sort of people, I never could perceive that painting had much influence on their passions. It is true that the best sorts of painting, as well as the best sorts of poetry, are not much understood in that sphere. But it is most certain that their passions are very strongly roused by a fanatic preacher, or by the ballads of Chevy Chase, or the Children in the Wood, and by other little popular poems and tales that are current in that rank of life. I do not know of any paintings, bad or good, that produce the same effect. So that poetry, with all its obscurity, has a more general, as well as a more powerful dominion over the passions, than

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Why does our author think it necessary to take more pains in clearing up this opinion? Repeat them. What criticism has been founded on them? How was this excellent judge led into this mistake? Of persons known by our author, what is remarked? With regard to the influence of painting and poetry on the minds of the common people, what is remarked? How is this remark illustrated?

the other art. And I think there are reasons in nature why the obscure idea, when properly conveyed, should be more affecting than the clear. It is our ignorance of things that causes all our admiration, and chiefly excites our passions. Knowledge and acquaintance make the most striking causes affect but little. It is thus with the vulgar; and all men are as the vulgar in what they do not understand. The ideas of eternity and infinity are among the most affecting we have; and perhaps there is nothing of which we really understand so little as of infinity and eternity. We do not any where meet a more sublime description than this justly celebrated one of Milton, wherein he gives the portrait of Satan with a dignity so suitable to the subject:

"He above the rest,  
In shape and gesture proudly eminent,  
Stood like a tower; his form had yet not lost  
All her original brightness, nor appear'd  
Less than archangel ruin'd, and th' excess  
Of glory obscured: as when the sun, new ris'n,  
Looks through the horizontal misty air  
Shorn of his beams; or from behind the moon  
In dim eclipse disastrous twilight sheds  
On half the nations, and with fear of change  
Perplexes monarchs."

Here is a very noble picture; and in what does this poetical picture consist? In images of a tower, an archangel, the sun rising through mists, or in an eclipse, the ruin of monarchs, and the revolutions of kingdoms. The mind is hurried out of itself by a crowd of great and confused images, which affect because they are crowded and confused. For separate them, and you

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For what are there reasons in nature? What is it that causes all our admiration, and chiefly excites our passions? What is the effect of knowledge and acquaintance? What is observed of the ideas of infinity and eternity? Recite Milton's portrait of Satan. What is said of it?

lose much of the greatness ; and join them, and you infallibly lose the clearness. The images raised by poetry are always of this obscure kind, though in general the effects of poetry are by no means to be attributed to the images it raises ; which point we shall examine more at large hereafter.\* But painting, when we have allowed for the pleasure of imitation, can only affect simply by the images it presents ; and even in painting, a judicious obscurity in some things contributes to the effect of the picture ; because the images in painting are exactly similar to those in nature ; and in nature dark, confused, uncertain images have a greater power on the fancy to form the grander passions than those have which are more clear and determinate. But where and when this observation may be applied to practice, and how far it shall be extended, will be better deduced from the nature of the subject, and from the occasion, than from any rules that can be given.

I am sensible that this idea has met with opposition, and is likely still to be rejected by several. But let it be considered, that hardly any thing can strike the mind with its greatness which does not make some sort of approach toward infinity ; which nothing can do while we are able to perceive its bounds ; but to see an object distinctly, and to perceive its bounds, are one and the same thing. [A clear idea is, therefore, another name for a little idea.] There is a passage in

What would be the effect of separating the images here associated ? and also of joining them ? What is observed of the images raised by poetry ? and of its effect ? By what only can painting affect ? Why does a judicious obscurity in painting frequently contribute to the effect of the picture ? How are we to ascertain where or when this observation is to be applied to practice ? How may the objection to this idea be answered ? A clear idea is another name for what ?

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\* Part v.

the book of Job amazingly sublime ; and this sublimity is principally due to the terrible uncertainty of the thing described : *In thoughts, from the visions of the night, when deep sleep falleth upon men, fear came upon me and trembling, which made all my bones to shake. Then a spirit passed before my face. The hair of my flesh stood up. It stood still, but I could not discern the form thereof ; an image was before mine eyes ; there was silence ; and I heard a voice, Shall mortal man be more just than God ?* We are first prepared with the utmost solemnity for the vision ; we are first terrified before we are let even into the obscure cause of our emotion ; but when this grand cause of terror makes its appearance, what is it ? Is it not wrapped up in the shades of its own incomprehensible darkness, more awful, more striking, more terrible than the liveliest description, than the clearest painting, could possibly represent it ? When painters have attempted to give us clear representations of these very fanciful and terrible ideas, they have, I think, almost always failed ; insomuch that I have been at a loss, in all the pictures I have seen of hell, whether the painter did not intend something ludicrous. Several painters have handled a subject of this kind with a view to assemble as many horrid phantoms as their imaginations could suggest ; but all the designs I have chanced to meet of the temptations of St. Anthony, were rather a sort of old wild grotesques, than any thing capable of producing a serious passion. In all these subjects poetry is very

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To what does the passage here introduced from Job owe its sublimity ? Recite it. How does the emotion produced by this passage proceed ? But when this grand cause of terror makes its appearance, what is it ? When painters have attempted to give as clear representations of these very fanciful and terrible ideas, how have they succeeded ? How have several painters handled subjects of this kind ? How have they succeeded ?

happy. Its apparitions, its chimeras, its harpies, its allegorical figures, are grand and affecting; and though Virgil's Fame and Homer's Discord are obscure, they are magnificent figures. These figures, in painting, would be clear enough, but I fear they might become ridiculous.

## SECTION VI.

### POWER.

BESIDES those things which *directly* suggest the idea of danger, and those which produce a similar effect from a mechanical cause, I know of nothing sublime which is not some modification of power. And this branch rises, as naturally as the other two branches, from terror, the common stock of every thing that is sublime. The idea of power, at first view, seems of the class of these indifferent ones, which may equally belong to pain or to pleasure. But, in reality, the affection arising from the idea of vast power is extremely remote from that neutral character. For, first, we must remember\* that the idea of pain, in its highest degree, is much stronger than the highest degree of pleasure, and that it preserves the same superiority through all the subordinate gradations. From hence it is, that where the chances for equal degrees of suffering or enjoyment are in any sort equal, the idea of

In all these subjects, how has poetry succeeded? What examples are given? How would these figures appear in painting?

Besides what things does our author know of nothing sublime which is not some modification of power? From what does this branch naturally arise? Of what class does the idea of power at first view seem to be? How does it appear that this is not the case? Hence what arises?

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\* Part I., sect. vii.



the suffering must always be prevalent. And, indeed, the ideas of pain, and, above all, of death, are so very affecting, that while we remain in the presence of whatever is supposed to have the power of inflicting either, it is impossible to be perfectly free from terror. Again, we know by experience that, for the enjoyment of pleasure, no great efforts of power are at all necessary; nay, we know that such efforts would go a great way toward destroying our satisfaction; for pleasure must be stolen, and not forced upon us: pleasure follows the will, and therefore we are generally affected with it by many things of a force greatly inferior to our own. But pain is always inflicted by a power, in some way, superior, because we never submit to pain willingly. So that strength, violence, pain, and terror are ideas that rush in upon the mind together. Look at a man or any other animal of prodigious strength, and what is your idea before reflection? Is it that this strength will be subservient to you, to your ease, to your pleasure, to your interest in any sense? No: the emotion you feel is, lest this enormous strength should be employed to the purposes of \* rapine and destruction. That power derives all its sublimity from the terror with which it is generally accompanied, will appear evidently from its effect in the very few cases in which it may be possible to strip a considerable degree of strength of its ability to hurt. When you do

How do the ideas of pain and death affect us? What do we know by experience? What is the effect of such efforts, and why? Pleasure follows what? and what is the consequence? How does it appear that pain is always inflicted by a power in some way superior? What ideas, consequently, rush in upon the mind together? How is this illustrated? How may it be made to appear evident that power derives all its sublimity from the terror with which it is generally accompanied?

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\* Vide part iii, sect. xxi.

this, you spoil it of every thing sublime, and it immediately becomes contemptible. An ox is a creature of vast strength; but he is an innocent creature, extremely serviceable, and not at all dangerous; for which reason the idea of an ox is by no means grand. A bull is strong too; but his strength is of another kind; often very destructive, seldom (at least among us) of any use in our business: the idea of a bull is therefore great, and it has frequently a place in sublime descriptions and elevating comparisons. Let us look at another strong animal in the two distinct lights in which we may consider him. The horse, in the light of a useful beast, fit for the plough, the road, the draught, in every social, useful light the horse has nothing of the sublime; but is it thus that we are affected with him, *whose neck is clothed with thunder, the glory of whose nostrils is terrible, who swalloweth the ground with fierceness and rage, neither believeth that it is the sound of the trumpet?* In this description the useful character of the horse entirely disappears, and the terrible and sublime blaze out together. We have continually about us animals of a strength that is considerable, but not pernicious. Among these we never look for the sublime; it comes upon us in the gloomy forest and in the howling wilderness, in the form of the lion, the tiger, the panther, or rhinoceros. Whenever strength is only useful, and employed for our benefit or our pleasure, then it is never sublime; for nothing can act agreeably to us that does not act in conformity to our will; but, to act agreeably to our will, it must be subject to us, and therefore can never be the cause

What examples are given to illustrate this remark? What is said of the description here given of the war-horse? In what does the sublime come upon us? Why is not strength sublime when it is useful, and employed for our benefit or our pleasure?

of a grand and commanding conception. The description of the wild ass, in Job, is worked up into no small sublimity, merely by insisting on his freedom, and his setting mankind at defiance ; otherwise the description of such an animal could have had nothing noble in it. *Who hath loosed, says he, the bands of the wild ass, whose house I have made the wilderness, and the barren land his dwellings ? He scorneth the multitude of the city, neither regardeth he the voice of the driver. The range of the mountains is his pasture.* The magnificent description of the unicorn, and of leviathan, in the same book, is full of the same heightening circumstances : *Will the unicorn be willing to serve thee ? canst thou bind the unicorn with his band in the furrow ? wilt thou trust him because his strength is great ? Canst thou draw out leviathan with a hook ? will he make a covenant with thee ? wilt thou take him for a servant forever ? shall not one be cast down even at the sight of him ?* In short, wheresoever we find strength, and in what light soever we look upon power, we shall all along observe the sublime the concomitant of terror, and contempt the attendant on a strength that is subservient and innoxious. The race of dogs, in many of their kinds, have generally a competent degree of strength and swiftness ; and they exert these, and other valuable qualities which they possess, greatly to our convenience and pleasure. Dogs are, indeed, the most social, affectionate, and amiable animals of the whole brute creation ; but love approaches much nearer to contempt than is commonly imagined ; and accordingly,

How is the description of the wild ass in Job worked up into no small sublimity ? Repeat it. What is said of the description of the unicorn and the leviathan in the same book ? Repeat them. Of what shall we always observe the sublime the concomitant, and contempt the attendant ? How is this observation illustrated in the dog and in the wolf ?

though we caress dogs, we borrow from them an appellation of the most despicable kind when we employ terms of reproach; and this appellation is the common mark of the last vileness and contempt in every language. Wolves have not more strength than several species of dogs; but, on account of their unmanageable fierceness, the idea of a wolf is not despicable; it is not excluded from the grand descriptions and similitudes. Thus we are affected by strength, which is *natural* power. The power which arises from institution in kings and commanders has the same connection with terror. Sovereigns are frequently addressed with the title of *dread majesty*. And it may be observed, that young persons little acquainted with the world, and who have not been used to approach men in power, are commonly struck with an awe which takes away the free use of their faculties. *When I prepared my seat in the street* (says Job), *the young men saw me and hid themselves*. Indeed, so natural is this timidity with regard to power, and so strongly does it inhere in our constitution, that very few are able to conquer it, but by mixing much in the business of the great world, or by using no small violence to their natural dispositions. I know some people are of opinion that no awe, no degree of terror, accompanies the idea of power, and have hazarded to affirm that we can contemplate the idea of God himself without any such emotion. I purposely avoided, when I first considered this subject, to introduce the idea of that great and tremendous Being as an example in an argument so light as this; though it

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What else has the same connection with terror? How are sovereigns frequently addressed? What is said of young persons little acquainted with the world? In what way only is this natural timidity to be conquered? Some people are of what opinion? and what have they hazarded? What did our author purposely avoid when he first considered this subject?

frequently occurred to me, not as an objection to, but as a strong confirmation of my notions in this matter. I hope, in what I am going to say, I shall avoid presumption, where it is almost impossible for any mortal to speak with strict propriety. I say, then, that while we consider the Godhead merely as he is an object of the understanding, which forms a complex idea of power, wisdom, justice, goodness, all stretched to a degree far exceeding the bounds of our comprehension; while we consider the Divinity in this refined and abstracted light, the imagination and passions are little affected. But because we are bound, by the condition of our nature, to ascend to these pure and intellectual ideas through the medium of sensible images, and to judge of these divine qualities by their evident acts and exertions, it becomes extremely hard to disentangle our idea of the cause from the effect by which we are led to know it. Thus, when we contemplate the Deity, his attributes and their operations coming united on the mind, form a sort of sensible image, and, as such, are capable of affecting the imagination. Now though, in a just idea of the Deity, perhaps none of his attributes are predominant, yet, to our imagination, his power is by far the most striking. Some reflection, some comparing, is necessary to satisfy us of his wisdom, his justice, and his goodness. To be struck with his power, it is only necessary that we should open our eyes. But while we contemplate so vast an object, under the arm, as it were, of almighty power, and invested upon every side with omnipresence, we shrink into the minuteness

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What does he hope in what he is going to say? When are the imagination and passions little affected by our considerations of the Divinity? What remark follows? How is it illustrated? How is the remark fully illustrated that, to our imaginations, the power of the Deity is the most striking of his attributes?

of our own nature, and are, in a manner, annihilated before him. And though a consideration of his other attributes may relieve, in some measure, our apprehensions, yet no conviction of the justice with which it is exercised, nor the mercy with which it is tempered, can wholly remove the terror that naturally arises from a force which nothing can withstand. If we rejoice, we rejoice with trembling; and even while we are receiving benefits, we can not but shudder at a power which can confer benefits of such mighty importance. When the Prophet David contemplated the wonders of wisdom and power which are displayed in the economy of man, he seems to have been struck with a sort of divine horror, and cried out, *Fearfully and wonderfully am I made!* A heathen poet has a sentiment of a similar nature; Horace looks upon it as the last effort of philosophical fortitude to behold, without terror and amazement, this immense and glorious fabric of the universe:

“Hunc solem, et stellas, et decedentia certis  
Tempora momentis, sunt qui formidine nulla  
Imbuti spectant.”

“There are persons who contemplate, without amazement, the sun and stars, and the seasons departing at their stated periods.”

Lucretius is a poet not to be suspected of giving way to superstitious terrors; yet, when he supposes the whole mechanism of nature laid open by the master of his philosophy, his transport on this magnificent view, which he has represented in the colors of such bold and lively poetry, is overcast with a shade of secret dread and horror:

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How was David affected when contemplating the wonders of wisdom and power which are displayed in the economy of man? What similar sentiment has Horace? What is remarked of Lucretius?

"His tibi me rebus quædam divina voluptas  
Percipit, atque horror, quod sic Natura tua vi  
Tam manifesta patet ex omni parte relecta."

"These things have transported me, but I tremble as I think that thy strong hand has laid open to view the operations of Nature."

But the Scripture alone can supply ideas answerable to the majesty of this subject. In the Scripture, wherever God is represented as appearing or speaking, every thing terrible in nature is called up to heighten the awe and solemnity of the Divine presence. The Psalms and the prophetical books are crowded with instances of this kind. *The earth shook* (says the Psalmist), *the heavens also dropped at the presence of the Lord*. And, what is remarkable, the painting preserves the same character, not only when he is supposed descending to take vengeance upon the wicked, but even when he exerts the like plenitude of power in acts of beneficence to mankind. *Tremble, thou earth! at the presence of the Lord; at the presence of the God of Jacob; which turned the rock into standing water, the flint into a fountain of waters!* It were endless to enumerate all the passages, both in the sacred and profane writers, which establish the general sentiment of mankind concerning the inseparable union of a sacred and reverential awe with our ideas of the Divinity. Hence the common maxim, *Primos in orbe deos fecit timor*: "Fear first made gods in the world." This maxim may be, as I believe it is, false with regard to the origin of religion. The maker of the maxim saw how inseparable these ideas were, without considering that the notion of some great power must be

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Recite the illustration. Where only can we find ideas answerable to the majesty of this subject? How is this illustrated? What is remarkable? What example is given? Out of the inseparable union of a sacred and reverential awe with our ideas of the Divinity, what maxim has grown? What is said of it? What did the maker of it see?

always precedent to our dread of it. But this dread must necessarily follow the idea of such a power when it is once excited in the mind. It is on this principle that true religion has, and must have, so large a mixture of salutary fear, and that false religions have generally nothing else but fear to support them. Before the Christian religion had, as it were, humanized the idea of the Divinity, and brought it somewhat nearer to us, there was very little said of the love of God. The followers of Plato have something of it, and only something; the other writers of pagan antiquity, whether poets or philosophers, nothing at all. And they who consider with what infinite attention, by what a disregard of every perishable object, through what long habits of piety and contemplation it is that any man is able to attain an entire love and devotion to the Deity, will easily perceive that it is not the first, the most natural, and the most striking effect, which proceeds from that idea. Thus, we have traced power through its several gradations unto the highest of all, where our imagination is finally lost; and we find terror quite throughout the progress, its inseparable companion, and growing along with it, as far as we can possibly trace them. Now, as power is undoubtedly a capital source of the sublime, this will point out evidently from whence its energy is derived, and to what class of ideas we ought to unite it.

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What results from this principle? When was there little said of the love of God? What is said of the followers of Plato, and of other writers of pagan antiquity? What remark follows? Having traced power through its various gradations, what do we find? What is the closing remark?



## SECTION VII.

## PRIVATION.

✓ ALL *general* privations are great, because they are terrible: *Vacuity, Darkness, Solitude, and Silence.* With what a fire of imagination, yet with what severity of judgment, has Virgil amassed all these circumstances, where he knows that all the images of a tremendous dignity ought to be united, at the mouth of hell! where, before he unlocks the secrets of the great deep, he seems to be seized with a religious horror, and to retire astonished at the boldness of his own design :

"Di quibus imperium est animarum, umbræque *silentes* !  
Et Chaos, et Phlegethon ! loca *nocte silentia* late !  
Sit mihi fas audita loqui ! sit numine vestro  
Pandere res alta terra et *caligine* mersas '  
Ibant *obscuri, sola sub nocte, per umbram,*  
Perque domos Ditis *vacuas, et inania regna.*"

"Ye subterraneous gods ! whose awful sway  
The gliding ghosts and *silent* shades obey :  
O Chaos, hear ! and Phlegethon profound !  
Whose solemn empire stretches wide around '  
Give me, ye great, tremendous powers, to tell  
Of scenes and wonders in the depth of hell :  
Give me your mighty secrets to display  
From those *black* realms of darkness to the day."—PITT.  
"*Obscure* they went through dreary *shades*, that led  
Along the waste dominions of the *dead.*"—DRYDEN.

## SECTION VIII.

## VASTNESS.

✓ [GREATNESS\* of dimension is a powerful cause of the

Why are all general privations great ? What are the examples ? What is remarked on the manner in which Virgil has amassed all these *circumstances* ? With what does he seem seized ? Repeat the passage.

sublime. This is too evident, and the observation too common, to need any illustration; it is not so common to consider in what ways greatness of dimension, vastness of extent, or quantity, has the most striking effect: for certainly there are ways and modes wherein the same quantity of extension shall produce greater effects than it is found to do in others. Extension is either in length, height, or depth. Of these, the length strikes least; a hundred yards of even ground will never work such an effect as a tower a hundred yards high, or a rock or mountain of that altitude. I am apt to imagine, likewise, that height is less grand than depth; and that we are more struck at looking down from a precipice than looking up at an object of equal height: but of that I am not very positive. A perpendicular has more force in forming the sublime than an inclined plane; and the effects of a rugged and broken surface seem stronger than where it is smooth and polished. It would carry us out of our way to enter in this place into the cause of these appearances; but certain it is they afford a large and fruitful field of speculation. However, it may not be amiss to add to these remarks upon magnitude, that as the great extreme of dimension is sublime, so the last extreme of littleness is in some measure sublime likewise; when we attend to the infinite divisibility of matter, when we pursue animal life into these excessively small and yet organized beings, that escape the nicest inquisition

How does it appear that it is not as common to consider in what ways greatness of dimension, &c., has the most striking effect, as it is to acknowledge that they are powerful sources of the sublime? What are the directions of extension? Which of these strikes least, and why? What does our author likewise imagine? Of a perpendicular, and of a rugged and broken surface, what is said? What inquiry here would carry us out of our way? What is certain? What, however, may not be amiss? How is this made to appear?

of the sense ; when we push our discoveries yet downward, and consider those creatures so many degrees yet smaller, and the still diminishing scales of existence, in tracing which the imagination is lost as well as the sense, we become amazed and confounded at the wonders of minuteness ; nor can we distinguish in its effect this extreme of littleness from the vast itself : for division must be infinite, as well as addition ; because the idea of a perfect unity can no more be arrived at than that of a complete whole, to which nothing may be added.

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## SECTION IX.

### INFINITY.

ANOTHER source of the sublime is *Infinity*, if it does not rather belong to the last. Infinity has a tendency to fill the mind with that sort of delightful horror which is the most genuine effect and truest test of the sublime. There are scarcely any things which can become the objects of our senses, that are really and in their own nature infinite ; but the eye not being able to perceive the bounds of many things, they seem to be infinite, and they produce the same effects as if they were really so. We are deceived, in the like manner, if the parts of some large object are so continued to any indefinite number that the imagination meets no check which may hinder its extending them at pleasure.

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Why can we not distinguish, in its effect, this extreme of littleness from the vast itself ?

What is another source of the sublime ? What tendency has it ? Why do things seem to be infinite which are in reality not so ? When, also, are we deceived in the same manner ?

Whenever we repeat any idea frequently, the mind, by a sort of mechanism, repeats it long after the first cause has ceased to operate.\* After whirling about, when we sit down, the objects about us still seem to whirl. After a long succession of noises, as the fall of waters or the beating of forge-hammers, the hammers beat and the water roars in the imagination long after the first sounds have ceased to affect it; and they die away, at last, by gradations which are scarcely perceptible. If you hold up a straight pole, with your eye to one end, it will seem extended to a length almost incredible.† Place a number of uniform and equidistant marks on this pole, they will cause the same deception, and seem multiplied without end. The senses, strongly affected in some one manner, can not quickly change their tenor, nor adapt themselves to other things; but they continue in their old channel until the strength of the first mover decays. This is the reason of an appearance very frequent in madmen, that they remain whole days and nights, sometimes whole years, in the constant repetition of some remark, some complaint, or song, which, having struck powerfully on their disordered imagination in the beginning of their phrensy, every repetition re-enforces it with new strength; and the hurry of their spirits, unrestrained by the curb of reason, continues it to the end of their lives.

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What is the effect of the frequent repetition of any idea? How is this illustrated? What is remarked of the senses when strongly affected in any particular manner? What is the effect of this on madmen?

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\* Part iv., sect. xii.

† Part iv., sect. xiv.

## SECTION X.

## SUCCESSION AND UNIFORMITY.

RV ✓ SUCCESSION and *uniformity* of parts are what constitute the artificial infinite. 1. *Succession*; which is requisite, that the parts may be continued so long and in such a direction as, by their frequent impulses on the sense, to impress the imagination with an idea of their progress beyond their actual limits. 2. *Uniformity*; because, if the figures of the parts should be changed, the imagination at every change finds a check; you are presented, at every alteration, with the termination of one idea and the beginning of another; by which means it becomes impossible to continue that uninterrupted progression which alone can stamp on bounded objects the character of infinity.\* It is in this kind of artificial infinity, I believe, we ought to look for the cause why a rotund has so noble an effect; for, in a rotund, whether it be a building or a plantation, you can no where fix a boundary; turn which way you will, the same object still seems to continue, and the imagination has no rest. But the parts must be uniform, as well as circularly disposed, to give this figure its full force; because any difference, whether it be in the disposition or in the figure, or even in the color of the parts, is highly prejudicial to the idea of infinity, which every change must check

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What constitutes the artificial infinite? What is remarked of succession and of uniformity? Why ought we to look to this kind of artificial infinity for the reason why a rotund has so noble an effect? Why must the parts be uniform as well as circularly disposed, to give this figure its full force?

\* Mr. Addison, in the Spectators concerning the pleasures of the imagination, thinks it is because, in the rotund, at one glance you see half the building. This I do not imagine to be the real cause.

and interrupt at every alteration commencing a new series. On the same principles of succession and uniformity, the grand appearance of the ancient heathen temples, which were generally oblong forms, with a range of uniform pillars on every side, will be easily accounted for. From the same cause, also, may be derived the grand effect of our aisles in many of our old cathedrals. The form of a cross, used in some churches, seems to me not so eligible as the parallelogram of the ancients; at least, I imagine it is not so proper for the outside; for, supposing the arms of the cross every way equal, if you stand in a direction parallel to any of the side-walls or colonnades, instead of a deception that makes the building more extended than it is, you are cut off from a considerable part (two thirds) of its *actual* length; and, to prevent all possibility of progression, the arms of the cross, taking a new direction, make a right angle with the beam, and thereby wholly turn the imagination from the repetition of the former idea. Or suppose the spectator placed where he may take a direct view of such a building, what will be the consequence? The necessary consequence will be, that a good part of the basis of each angle, formed by the intersection of the arms of the cross, must be inevitably lost; the whole must, of course, assume a broken, unconnected figure; the lights must be unequal, here strong, and there weak; without that noble gradation which the perspective always effects on parts disposed uninterruptedly in a right line. Some or all of these objections will lie against every figure of a

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How may the grand appearance of heathen temples be accounted for? What also may be derived from the same cause? Why is not the form of a cross as eligible as the parallelogram of the ancients? If the spectator be placed where he may take a direct view of such a building, what will be the consequence?

cross, in whatever view you take it. I exemplified them in the Greek cross, in which these faults appear the most strongly; but they appear in some degree in all sorts of crosses. Indeed, there is nothing more prejudicial to the grandeur of buildings than to abound in angles—a fault obvious in many, and owing to an inordinate thirst for variety, which, whenever it prevails, is sure to leave very little true taste.

## SECTION XI.

### MAGNITUDE IN BUILDING.

To the sublime in building greatness of dimension seems requisite; for, on a few parts, and those small, the imagination can not rise to any idea of infinity. No greatness in the manner can effectually compensate for the want of proper dimensions. There is no danger of drawing men into extravagant designs by this rule; it carries its own caution along with it; because too great a length in buildings destroys the purpose of greatness, which it was intended to promote: the perspective will lessen it in height as it gains in length, and will bring it at last to a point, turning the whole figure into a sort of triangle, the poorest in its effect of almost any figure that can be presented to the eye. I have ever observed that colonnades, and avenues of trees of a moderate length, were, without comparison, far grander than when they were suffered to in what cross do these faults most strongly appear? What is greatly prejudicial to the grandeur of buildings, and why?

Why does greatness of dimension seem requisite to the sublime in building? For what can not greatness in the manner effectually compensate? Why is there no danger of drawing men into extravagant designs by this rule? Of colonnades and avenues of trees what has our author ever observed?

run to immense distances. ✓ A true artist should put a generous deceit on the spectators, and effect the noblest designs by easy methods. Designs that are vast by their dimensions only, are always the sign of a common and low imagination. ✓ No work of art can be great but as it deceives; to be otherwise, is the prerogative of nature only. A good eye will fix the medium between an excessive length or height (for the same objection lies against both) and a short or broken quantity; and perhaps it might be ascertained to a tolerable degree of exactness, if it were my purpose to descend far into the particulars of any art.

## SECTION XII.

### INFINITY IN PLEASING OBJECTS.

✓ INFINITY, though of another kind, causes much of our pleasure in agreeable, as well as of our delight in sublime images. The spring is the pleasantest of the seasons; and the young of most animals, though far from being completely fashioned, afford a more agreeable sensation than the full grown, because the imagination is entertained with the promise of something more, and does not acquiesce in the present object of the sense. In unfinished sketches of drawing, I have often seen some things which pleased me beyond the

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What should a true artist do? Of designs that are vast only by their dimensions, what is observed? How only can works of art be great, and why? Between what will a good eye fix the medium? What, perhaps, might be ascertained?

How is the observation illustrated, that infinity causes much of our pleasure in agreeable, as well as of our delight in sublime images? With unfinished sketches in drawing, how are we often affected, and why?



best finishing ; and this, I believe, proceeds from the cause I have just now assigned.

### SECTION XIII.

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#### DIFFICULTY.

✓ ANOTHER source of greatness is *Difficulty*.\* [ When any work seems to have required immense force and labor to effect it, the idea is grand. ] Stonehenge, neither for disposition nor ornament, has any thing admirable ; but those huge rude masses of stone, set on end and piled on each other, turn the mind on the immense force necessary for such a work : nay, the rudeness of the work increases this cause of grandeur, as it excludes the idea of art and contrivance ; for dexterity produces another sort of effect, which is different enough from this.

### SECTION XIV.

#### MAGNIFICENCE.

✓ MAGNIFICENCE is likewise a source of the sublime. A great profusion of things, which are splendid or valuable in themselves, is *magnificent*. The starry heaven, though it occurs so very frequently to our view, never fails to excite an idea of grandeur. This can not be owing to any thing in the stars themselves, separately

From what consideration does it appear that difficulty is another source of greatness ? How is this illustrated ? Why does the rudeness of the work increase this cause of grandeur ?

What is likewise a source of the sublime ? What is observed of the starry heaven ?

\* Part iv., sect. iv., v., vi.

considered. ✓ The number is certainly the cause. The apparent disorder augments the grandeur; for the appearance of care is highly contrary to our ideas of magnificence. Besides, the stars lie in such apparent confusion as makes it impossible, on ordinary occasions, to reckon them. This gives them the advantage of a sort of infinity. In works of art, this kind of grandeur, which consists in multitude, is to be very cautiously admitted; because a profusion of excellent things is not to be attained, or with too much difficulty; and because in many cases this splendid confusion would destroy all use, which should be attended to, in most of the works of art, with the greatest care: besides, it is to be considered, that unless you can produce an appearance of infinity by your disorder, you will have disorder only, without magnificence. There are, however, a sort of fire-works, and some other things, that in this way succeed well, and are truly grand. There are also many descriptions in the poets and orators which owe their sublimity to a richness and profusion of images, in which the mind is so dazzled as to make it impossible to attend to that exact coherence and agreement of the allusions which we should require on every other occasion. I do not now remember a more striking example of this than the description which is given of the king's army in the play of Henry the Fourth:

"All furnish'd, all in arms  
 All plumed like ostriches that with the wind  
 Baited like eagles having lately bathed:  
 As full of spirit as the month of May,  
 And gorgeous as the sun in midsummer,  
 Wanton as youthful goats, wild as young bulls.

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Why is this kind of grandeur to be very cautiously admitted in works of art? What also is to be considered? What exceptions are there to this rule? In poetry, what example is given? Repeat it.

I saw young Harry with his beaver on  
Rise from the ground like feather'd Mercury,  
And vaulted with such ease into his seat  
As if an angel dropp'd from the clouds  
To turn and wind a fiery Pegasus."

In that excellent book, so remarkable for the vivacity of its descriptions, as well as the solidity and penetration of its sentences, the Wisdom of the Son of Sirach, there is a noble panegyric on the high-priest, Simon, the son of Onias ; and it is a very fine example of the point before us :

*How was he honored in the midst of the people, in his coming out of the sanctuary ! He was as the morning star in the midst of a cloud, and as the moon at the full ; as the sun shining upon the temple of the Most High, and as the rainbow giving light in the bright clouds : and as the flower of roses in the spring of the year, as lilies by the rivers of waters, and as the frankincense-tree in summer ; as fire and incense in the censer, and as a vessel of gold set with precious stones ; as a fair olive-tree budding forth fruit, and as a cypress which groweth up to the clouds. When he put on the robes of honor, and was clothed with the perfection of glory, when he went up to the holy altar, he made the garment of holiness honorable. He himself stood by the hearth of the altar, compassed with his brethren round about ; as a young cedar in Libanus, and as palm-trees compassed they him about. So were all the sons of Aaron in their glory, and the oblations of the Lord in their hands, &c.*

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What in oratory ? Repeat it.

## SECTION XV.

## LIGHT.

HAVING considered extension, so far as it is capable of raising ideas of greatness, *color* comes next under consideration. All colors depend on light. Light, therefore, ought previously to be examined; and with it its opposite, darkness. With regard to light, to make it a cause capable of producing the sublime, it must be attended with some circumstances besides its bare faculty of showing other objects. Mere light is too common a thing to make a strong impression on the mind; and without a strong impression nothing can be sublime. But such a light as that of the sun, immediately exerted on the eye, as it overpowers the sense, is a very great idea. Light of an inferior strength to this, if it moves with great celerity, has the same power; for lightning is certainly productive of grandeur, which it owes chiefly to the extreme velocity of its motion. A quick transition from light to darkness, or from darkness to light, has yet a greater effect. But darkness is more productive of sublime ideas than light. Our great poet was convinced of this; and, indeed, so full was he of this idea, so entirely possessed with the power of a well-managed darkness, that in describing the appearance of the Deity, amid that profusion of magnificent images which the grandeur of his subject provokes him to pour out upon every side, he is far from forgetting the obscurity which surrounds the most incomprehensible of all beings, but

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What comes next under consideration? On what do all colors depend? What ought, therefore, previously to be examined? What is observed of light, and why? Of the light of the sun what is remarked? When has light of an inferior strength the same power, and why? What has a still greater effect? What was the effect of Milton's conviction of this fact?

"With the majesty of *darkness* round  
Circles his throne."

And, what is no less remarkable, our author had the secret of preserving this idea, even when he seemed to depart the farthest from it, when he describes the light and glory which flows from the Divine presence; a light which, by its very excess, is converted into a species of darkness:

"*Dark* with excessive light thy skirts appear."

Here is an idea not only poetical in a high degree, but strictly and philosophically just. ✓ Extreme light, by overcoming the organs of sight, obliterates all objects, so as, in its effect, exactly to resemble darkness. After looking for some time at the sun, two black spots, the impression which it leaves, seem to dance before our eyes. Thus are two ideas, as opposite as can be imagined, reconciled in the extremes of both; and both, in spite of their opposite nature, brought to concur in producing the sublime. And this is not the only instance wherein the opposite extremes operate equally in favor of the sublime, which in all things abhors mediocrity.

## SECTION XVI.

### LIGHT IN BUILDING.

As the management of light is a matter of importance in architecture, it is worth inquiring how far this remark is applicable to building. I think, then, that ✓ all edifices calculated to produce an idea of the sublime ought rather to be dark and gloomy; and this for

*With him, what is no less remarkable? What is said of this idea? and how is it illustrated? Thus, what is reconciled?*

two reasons : the first is, that darkness itself, on other occasions, is known by experience to have a greater effect on the passions than light. The second is, that, to make an object very striking, we should make it as different as possible from the objects with which we have been immediately conversant ; when, therefore, you enter a building, you can not pass into a greater light than you had in the open air : to go into one some few degrees less luminous, can make only a trifling change ; but, to make the transition thoroughly striking, you ought to pass from the greatest light to as much darkness as is consistent with the uses of architecture. At night the contrary rule will hold, but for the very same reason ; and the more highly a room is then illuminated, the grander will the passion be.

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## SECTION XVII.

### COLOR CONSIDERED AS PRODUCTIVE OF THE SUBLIME.

AMONG colors, such as are soft and cheerful (except, perhaps, a strong red, which is cheerful) are unfit to produce grand images. An immense mountain, covered with a shining green turf, is nothing, in this respect, to one dark and gloomy ; the cloudy sky is more grand than the blue, and night more sublime and solemn than day. Therefore, in historical painting, a gay or gaudy drapery can never have a happy effect ; and in buildings, when the highest degree of the sub-

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For what two reasons should all edifices, calculated to produce an idea of the sublime, be dark and gloomy ? How is the second illustrated ? What is necessary in order to make the transition thoroughly striking ? Why does the contrary rule hold good at night ?

What colors are unfit to produce grand images ? How is this illustrated ? What is observed of historical painting, and of buildings ?

lime is intended, the materials and ornaments ought neither to be white nor green, nor yellow, nor blue, nor of a pale red, nor violet, nor spotted, but of sad and fuscous colors, as black, or brown, or deep purple, and the like. Much of gilding, mosaics, painting, or statues, contribute but little to the sublime. This rule need not be put in practice except where a uniform degree of the most striking sublimity is to be produced, and that in every particular; for it ought to be observed, that this melancholy kind of greatness, though it be certainly the highest, ought not to be studied in all sorts of edifices, where yet grandeur must be studied; in such cases, the sublimity must be drawn from the other sources, with a strict caution, however, against any thing light and riant, as nothing so effectually deadens the whole taste of the sublime.

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## SECTION XVIII.

### SOUND AND LOUDNESS.

THE eye is not the only organ of sensation by which a sublime passion may be produced. Sounds have a great power in these as in most other passions. I do not mean words, because words do not affect simply by their sounds, but by means altogether different. Excessive loudness alone is sufficient to overpower the soul, to suspend its action, and to fill it with terror. The noise of vast cataracts, raging storms, thunder, or artillery, awakes a great and awful sensation in the

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Where only should this rule be put in practice, and why?

What is not the only organ of sensation by which a sublime passion may be produced? What else have a great power in these, as well as in most other passions? Why does not our author mean words? What only is sufficient to overpower the soul? How is this illustrated?

mind, though we can observe no nicety or artifice in those sorts of music. The shouting of multitudes has a similar effect; and, by the sole strength of the sound, so amazes and confounds the imagination, that, in this staggering and hurry of the mind, the best-established tempers can scarcely forbear being borne down, and joining in the common cry and common resolution of the crowd.

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## SECTION XIX.

### SUDDENNESS.

A **SUDDEN** beginning, or sudden cessation of sound of any considerable force, has the same power. The attention is roused by this, and the faculties driven forward, as it were, on their guard. Whatever, either in sights or sounds, makes the transition from one extreme to the other easy, causes no terror, and, consequently, can be no cause of greatness. In every thing sudden and unexpected, we are apt to start; that is, we have a perception of danger, and our nature rouses us to guard against it. It may be observed, that a single sound of strength, though but of short duration, if repeated after intervals, has a grand effect. Few things are more awful than the striking of a great clock, when the silence of the night prevents the attention from being too much dissipated. The same may be said of a single stroke of a drum, repeated with pauses; and of the successive firing of a cannon

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What is remarked on the shouting of multitudes?

What is observed of a sudden beginning or sudden cessation of sound? What causes no terror, and, consequently, can be no cause of greatness? What is the effect of whatever is sudden or unexpected? Of a single sound what may be observed? How is this illustrated?



at a distance. All the effects mentioned in this section have causes very nearly alike.

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## SECTION XX.

### INTERMITTING.

✓ A low, tremulous, intermitting sound, though it seems, in some respects, opposite to that just mentioned, is productive of the sublime. It is worth while to examine this a little. The fact itself must be determined by every man's own experience and reflection. I have already observed\* that night increases our terror more, perhaps, than any thing else: it is our nature, when we do not know what may happen to us, to fear the worst that can happen; and hence it is that uncertainty is so terrible, that we often seek to be rid of it at the hazard of a certain mischief. Now, some low, confused, uncertain sounds leave us in the same ✓ fearful anxiety concerning their causes, that no light, or an uncertain light, does concerning the objects that surround us:

"Quale per incertam lunam sub luce maligna  
Est iter in sylvis."

"A faint shadow of uncertain light,  
Like as a lamp, whose life doth fade away,  
Or as the moon, clothed with cloudy night,  
Doth show to him who walks in fear and great affright."

SPENSER.

✓ But a light now appearing, and now leaving us, and so

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What is observed of a low, tremulous, intermitting sound? How must this fact be determined? What has already been observed? What is natural? Of low, confused, and uncertain sounds, what is observed? What example is given?

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\* Sect. iii.

off and on, is even more terrible than total darkness; and a sort of uncertain sounds are, where the necessary dispositions concur, more alarming than a total silence.

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## SECTION XXI.

### THE CRIES OF ANIMALS.

✓ SUCH sounds as imitate the natural inarticulate voices of men, or any animals in pain or danger, are capable of conveying great ideas, unless it be the well-known voice of some creature on which we are used to look with contempt. ✓ The angry tones of wild beasts are equally capable of causing a great and awful sensation.

"Hinc exaudiri gemitus, iræque leonum  
Vincula recusantum, et sera sub nocte rudentum;  
Setigerique sues, atque in præsepibus ursi  
Sævire; et formæ magnorum ululare luporum."

"From hence were heard, rebellowing to the main,  
The roars of lions that refuse the chain,  
The grunts of bristled boars, and groans of bears,  
And herds of howling wolves that stun the sailor's ears.

It might seem that these modulations of sound carry some connection with the nature of the things they represent, and are not merely arbitrary; because the natural cries of all animals, even of those animals with whom we have not been acquainted, never fail to make themselves sufficiently understood: this can not be said of language. The modifications of sound, which

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What is even more terrible than darkness? and what is more alarming than a total silence?

What sounds are capable of conveying great ideas? With what exception? What is observed of the angry tones of wild beasts? Give the example. What is observed of these modulations of sound? Why can not this be said of language?

may be productive of the sublime, are almost infinite. Those I have mentioned are only a few instances, to show on what principle they are all built.

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## SECTION XXII.

### SMELL AND TASTE, BITTERS AND STENCHES.

SMELLS and TASTE have some share, too, in ideas of greatness; but it is a small one, weak in its nature, and confined in its operations. I shall only observe, that no smells or tastes can produce a grand sensation except excessive bitters and intolerable stench. It is true that these affections of the smell and taste, when they are in their full force, and lean directly upon the sensory, are simply painful, and accompanied with no sort of delight; but when they are moderated, as in a description or narrative, they become sources of the sublime, as genuine as any other, and upon the very same principle as a moderated pain. "A cup of bitterness"—"to drain the bitter cup of fortune"—"the bitter apples of Sodom;" these are all ideas suitable to a sublime description. Nor is this passage of Virgil without sublimity, where the stench of the vapor in Albunea conspires so happily with the sacred horror and gloominess of that prophetic forest:

"Et rex sollicitus monstros oracula Fanni  
 Fatidici genitoris adit, lucosque sub alta  
 Consulit Albunea, nemorum quas maxima sacro  
 Fonte sonat; sævamque exhalat opaca Mephitim."

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Of smell and taste, what is observed? What smells only can produce a grand sensation? When are these affections simply painful, and accompanied with no sort of delight? When do they become sources of the sublime, and upon what principle? What examples of illustrations are given? Repeat those from Virgil, with the remarks upon them.

"Latinus, frighted with this dire oment,  
For counsel to his father Fannus went,  
And sought the shades renown'd for prophecy,  
Which near Albunea's sulph'rous fountain lie."

In the sixth book, and in a very sublime description, the poisonous exhalation of Acheron is not forgotten; nor does it at all disagree with the other images among which it is introduced :

"*Spelunca alta fuit, vastoque immanis hiatu  
Scrupea, tuta lacu nigro, nemorumque tenebris,  
Quam super haud ullæ poterant impune volantes  
Tendere iter pennis, talis sese halitus atris  
Faucibus effundens supera ad convexa ferebat.*"

"Deep was the cave ; and, downward as it went  
From the wide mouth, a rocky rough descent ;  
And here th' access a gloomy grove defends ;  
And here th' innavigable lake extends,  
O'er whose unhappy waters, void of light,  
No bird presumes to steer his airy flight ;  
Such deadly stench from the depth arise,  
And streaming sulphur, that infects the skies."

I have added these examples, because some friends, for whose judgment I have great deference, were of opinion that, if the sentiment stood nakedly by itself, it would be subject, at first view, to burlesque and ridicule; but this, I imagine, would principally arise from considering the bitterness and stench in company with mean and contemptible ideas, with which, it must be owned, they are often united : such a union degrades the sublime in all other instances as well as in those. But it is one of the tests by which the sublimity of an image is to be tried, not whether it becomes mean when associated with mean ideas, but whether, when united with images of an allowed grandeur, the whole composition is supported with dignity. Things which

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Why were these examples given ? From what would this principally arise ?  
What is one of the tests by which a sublime image is to be tried ?

are terrible are always great; but when things possess disagreeable qualities, or such as have, indeed, some degree of danger, but of a danger easily overcome, they are merely *odious*, as toads and spiders.

### SECTION XXIII.

#### FEELING.—PAIN.

Of *feeling*, little more can be said than that the idea of bodily pain, in all the modes and degrees of labor, pain, anguish, torment, is productive of the sublime; and nothing else, in this sense, can produce it. I need not give here any fresh instances, as those given in the former sections abundantly illustrate a remark that in reality wants only an attention to nature to be made by every body.

HAVING thus run through the causes of the sublime with reference to all the senses, my first observation (sect. vii.) will be found very nearly true, that the sublime is an idea belonging to self-preservation; that it is therefore one of the most affecting we have; that its strongest emotion is an emotion of distress; and that no pleasure\* from a positive cause belongs to it. Num-

Of things that are terrible, and of things that possess disagreeable qualities, what is observed?

Of feeling, little more than what can be said? Why are fresh instances here unnecessary?

Having thus run through the causes of the sublime with reference to all the senses, what observation will be found to be nearly true?

\* Vide part i., sect. vi.

berless examples, besides those mentioned, might be brought in support of these truths, and many, perhaps, useful consequences drawn from them :

“ Sed fugit interea, fugit irrevocabile tempus,  
Singula dum capti circumvectamur amore.”

“ But in the mean while, irrevocable time flies away, while we are engaged in our favorite pursuit.”

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Repeat the closing remark.

## PART III.

## SECTION I.

## OF BEAUTY.

It is my design to consider beauty as distinguished from the sublime; and, in the course of the inquiry, to examine how far it is consistent with it. But, previous to this, we must take a short review of the opinions already entertained of this quality, which, I think, are hardly to be reduced to any fixed principles; because men are used to talk of beauty in a figurative manner, that is to say, in a manner extremely uncertain and indeterminate. By beauty, I mean that quality, or those qualities in bodies by which they cause love, or some passion similar to it. I confine this definition to the merely sensible qualities of things, for the sake of preserving the utmost simplicity in a subject which must always distract us, whenever we take in those various causes of sympathy which attach us to any person or things from secondary considerations, and not from the direct force which they have merely on being viewed. I likewise distinguish love, by which I mean that satisfaction which arises to the mind upon contemplating any thing beautiful, of whatsoever nature it may be, from desire, which is an energy of the mind that hurries us on to the possession of certain ob-

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How is beauty to be considered? Of what must we previously take a review? Why are those opinions hardly to be reduced to any fixed principle? What is here meant by beauty? Why is this definition confined to *the mere sensible* qualities of things? How is love likewise distinguished?

jects that do not affect us as they are beautiful, but by means altogether different. | We shall have a strong desire for a woman of no remarkable beauty, while the greatest beauty in men, or in other animals, though it causes love, yet it excites nothing at all of desire; which shows that beauty, and the passion caused by beauty, which I call love, is different from desire, though desire may sometimes operate along with it; but it is to this latter that we must attribute those violent and tempestuous passions, and the consequent emotions of the body which attend what is called love in some of its ordinary acceptations, and not to the effects of beauty merely as it is such.

## SECTION II.

### PROPORTION NOT THE CAUSE OF BEAUTY IN VEGETABLES.

BEAUTY has usually been said to consist in certain proportions of parts. On considering the matter, I have great reason to doubt whether beauty be at all an idea belonging to proportion. Proportion relates almost wholly to convenience, as every idea of order seems to do; and it must, therefore, be considered as a creature of the understanding, rather than a primary cause acting on the senses and imagination. It is not by the force of long attention and inquiry that we find an object to be beautiful: beauty demands no assistance from our reasoning; even the will is uncon-

What shows that beauty, or the passion caused by beauty, is different from desire? What must we attribute to this latter?

In what has beauty usually been said to consist? What is there, on consideration, great reason to doubt, and why? What is observed of our perception of the beautiful?



cerned : the appearance of beauty as effectually causes some degree of love in us as the application of ice or fire produces the ideas of heat or cold. To gain something like a satisfactory conclusion in this point, it were well to examine what proportion is, since several who make use of that word do not always seem to understand very clearly the force of the term, nor to have very distinct ideas concerning the thing itself. Proportion is the measure of relative quantity. Since all quantity is divisible, it is evident that every distinct part into which any quantity is divided must bear some relation to the other parts, or to the whole. These relations give an origin to the idea of proportion. They are discovered by mensuration; and they are the objects of mathematical inquiry. But whether any part of any determinate quantity be a fourth, or a fifth, or a sixth, or moiety of the whole; or whether it be of equal length with any other part, or double its length, or but one half, is a matter merely indifferent to the mind; it stands neuter in the question; and it is from this absolute indifference and tranquillity of the mind that mathematical speculations derive some of their most considerable advantages; because there is nothing to interest the imagination; because the judgment sits free and unbiased to examine the point. All proportions, every arrangement of quantity, are alike to the understanding, because the same truths result to it from all; from greater, from lesser, from equality and inequality. But surely beauty is no idea belong-

To be satisfied of this, what examination is necessary, and why? What is proportion? From the divisibility of all quantity, what is evident? What originate from these relations? How are they discovered? and of what are they the objects? What is a matter merely indifferent to the mind? What arises from this absolute indifference, and why? Why are all proportions, and every arrangement of quantity, alike to the understanding?

ing to mensuration ; nor has it any thing to do with calculation and geometry. If it had, we might then point out some certain measures which we could demonstrate to be beautiful, either as simply considered, or as related to others ; and we could call in those natural objects, for whose beauty we have no voucher but the sense, to this happy standard, and confirm the voice of our passions by the determination of our reason. But, since we have not this help, let us see whether proportion can in any sense be considered as the cause of beauty, as has been so generally, and by some so confidently affirmed. If proportion be one of the constituents of beauty, it must derive that power either from some natural properties inherent in certain measures which operate mechanically, from the operation of custom, or from the fitness which some measures have to answer some particular ends of convenience. Our business, therefore, is to inquire whether the parts of those objects, which are found beautiful in the vegetable or animal kingdoms, are constantly so formed according to such certain measures as may serve to satisfy us that their beauty results from those measures on the principle of a natural mechanical cause ; or from custom ; or, in fine, from their fitness for any determinate purposes. I intend to examine this point under each of these heads in their order. But, before I proceed farther, I hope it will not be thought amiss if I lay down the rules which governed me in this inquiry, and which have misled me in it, if I have gone astray. 1. If two bodies produce the

With what has beauty nothing to do ? If it had, what would be the consequence ? If proportion be one of the constituents of beauty, from what must it derive that power ? What, therefore, is our business ? In what order is this point to be examined ? In this inquiry, what are the rules by which our author was governed ?

same, or a similar effect, on the mind, and on examination they are found to agree in some of their properties, and to differ in others, the common effect is to be attributed to the properties in which they agree, and not to those in which they differ. 2. Not to account for the effect of a natural object from the effect of an artificial object. 3. Not to account for the effect of any natural object from a conclusion of our reason concerning its uses, if a natural cause may be assigned. 4. Not to admit any determinate quantity, or any relation of quantity, as the cause of a certain effect, if the effect is produced by different or opposite measures and relations; or if these measures and relations may exist, and yet the effect may not be produced. These are the rules which I have chiefly followed while I examined into the power of proportion considered as a natural cause; and these, if he thinks them just, I request the reader to carry with him throughout the following discussion, while we inquire, in the first place, in what things we find this quality of beauty; next, to see whether in these we can find any assignable proportions, in such a manner as ought to convince us that our idea of beauty results from them. We shall consider this pleasing power as it appears in vegetables, in the inferior animals, and in man. Turning our eyes to the vegetable creation, we find nothing there so beautiful as flowers; but flowers are almost of every sort of shape, and of every sort of disposition; they are turned and fashioned into an infinite variety of forms; and from these forms botanists have given them their names, which are almost as various. What

beauty

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While we are making what inquiries is the reader requested to carry these rules with him? As it appears, in what shall we consider this pleasing power? What is remarked of the beauty of flowers?

proportion do we discover between the stalks and the leaves of flowers, or between the leaves and the pistils? How does the slender stalk of the rose agree with the bulky head under which it bends? But the rose is a beautiful flower; and can we undertake to say that it does not owe a great deal of its beauty even to that disproportion? The rose is a large flower, yet it grows upon a small shrub: the flower of the apple is very small, and grows upon a large tree; yet the rose and the apple-blossom are both beautiful, and the plants that bear them are most engagingly attired, notwithstanding this disproportion. What, by general consent, is allowed to be a more beautiful object than an orange-tree, flourishing at once with its leaves, its blossoms, and its fruit? But it is in vain that we search here for any proportion between the height, the breadth, or any thing else concerning the dimensions of the whole, or concerning the relation of the particular parts to each other. I grant that we may observe in many flowers something of a regular figure, and of a methodical disposition of the leaves. The rose has such a figure and such a disposition of its petals; but, in an oblique view, when this figure is in a good measure lost, and the order of the leaves confounded, it yet retains its beauty; the rose is even more beautiful before it is full blown; and the bud, before this exact figure is formed: and this is not the only instance wherein method and exactness, the soul of proportion, are found rather prejudicial than serviceable to the cause of beauty.

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What is said of the rose, of the flower of the apple, and of the orange-tree? For what do we here search in vain? What is granted? When is the rose most beautiful? and of what is this not the only instance?

## SECTION III.

## PROPORTION NOT THE CAUSE OF BEAUTY IN ANIMALS.

✓ THAT proportion has but a small share in the formation of beauty, is full as evident among animals. Here the greatest variety of shapes and disproportions of parts are well fitted to excite this idea. The swan, confessedly a beautiful bird, has a neck longer than the rest of his body, and but a very short tail: is this a beautiful proportion? We must allow that it is. But, then, what shall we say to the peacock, who has comparatively but a short neck, with a tail longer than the neck and the rest of the body taken together? How many birds are there that vary infinitely from each of these standards, and from every other which you can fix, with proportions different, and often directly opposite to each other! and yet many of these birds are extremely beautiful; when, upon considering them, we find nothing in any one part that might determine us, *à priori*, to say what the others ought to be, nor, indeed, to guess any thing about them, but what experience might show to be full of disappointment and mistake. And with regard to the colors, either of birds or flowers, for there is something similar in the coloring of both, whether they are considered in their extension or gradation, there is nothing of proportion to be observed. Some are of but one single color, others have all the colors of the rainbow; some are of the primary colors, others are of the mixed; in short, an attentive observer may soon conclude that there is.

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From what consideration does it appear evident that proportion has but a small share in the formation of beauty among animals? How is this illustrated in the swan? and also in the peacock? What is farther remarked on the proportion of birds? With regard to the colors, either of birds or flowers, what is said? What may an attentive observer soon conclude?

as little of proportion in the coloring as in the shapes of these objects. Turn next to beasts : examine the head of a beautiful horse ; find what proportion that bears to his body, and to his limbs, and what relations these have to each other ; and when you have settled these proportions as a standard of beauty, then take a dog or cat, or any other animal, and examine how far the same proportions between their heads and their neck, between those and the body, and so on, are found to hold : I think we may safely say that they differ in every species ; yet that there are individuals found in a great many species so differing that have a very striking beauty. Now if it be allowed that very different, and even contrary, forms and dispositions are consistent with beauty, it amounts, I believe, to a concession that no certain measures, operating from a natural principle, are necessary to produce it, at least so far as the brute species is concerned.

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#### SECTION IV.

##### PROPORTION NOT THE CAUSE OF BEAUTY IN THE HUMAN SPECIES.

THERE are some parts of the human body that are observed to hold certain proportions to each other ; but, before it can be proved that the efficient cause of beauty lies in these, it must be shown that, wherever these are found exact, the person to whom they belong

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How is this principle farther illustrated from a horse, and a dog or a cat ? If, then, it be allowed that very different and even contrary forms and dispositions are consistent with beauty, to what does it amount ?

Before it can be proved that the efficient cause of beauty lies in those parts of the human body that hold certain proportions to each other, what must be shown ? By this, what is meant ?

is beautiful : I mean in the effect produced on the view, either of any member distinctly considered, or of the whole body together. It must be likewise shown that these parts stand in such a relation to each other that the comparison between them may be easily made, and that the affection of the mind may naturally result from it. For my part, I have at several times very carefully examined many of those proportions, and found them hold very nearly, or altogether alike, in many subjects, which were not only very different from one another, but where one has been very beautiful, and the other very remote from beauty. With regard to the parts which are found so proportioned, they are often so remote from each other in situation, nature, and office, that I can not see how they admit of any comparison, nor, consequently, how any effect owing to proportion can result from them. The neck, say they, in beautiful bodies, should measure with the calf of the leg ; it should likewise be twice the circumference of the wrist. And an infinity of observations of this kind are to be found in the writings and conversations of many. But what relation has the calf of the leg to the neck, or either of these parts to the wrist ? These proportions are certainly to be found in handsome bodies. They are as certainly in ugly ones, as any who will take the pains to try may find. Nay, I do not know but they may be the least perfect in some of the most beautiful. You may assign any proportions you please to every part of the human body ; and I undertake that a painter shall religiously observe them all, and notwithstanding produce, if he pleases, a very

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What must likewise be shown ? On examination, what has our author found ? Of the parts that are found so proportioned, what is observed ? What examples are given ? and what is said of them ? How may these remarks be illustrated in painting ?

ugly figure. The same painter shall considerably deviate from these proportions, and produce a very beautiful one. And, indeed, it may be observed in the master-pieces of the ancient and modern statuary, that several of them differ very widely from the proportions of others, in parts very conspicuous, and of great consideration; and that they differ no less from the proportions we find in living men of forms extremely striking and agreeable. And, after all, how are the partisans of proportional beauty agreed among themselves about the proportions of the human body? Some hold it to be seven heads; some make it eight; while others extend it even to ten; a vast difference in such a small number of divisions! Others take other methods of estimating the proportions, and all with equal success. But are these proportions exactly the same in all handsome men, or are they at all the proportions found in beautiful women? Nobody will say that they are; yet both sexes are undoubtedly capable of beauty, and the female of the greatest; which advantage, I believe, will hardly be attributed to the superior exactness of proportion in the fair sex. Let us rest a moment on this point, and consider how much difference there is between the measures that prevail in many similar parts of the body, in the two sexes, of this single species alone. If you assign any determinate proportions to the limbs of a man, and if you limit human beauty to these proportions, when you find a woman who differs in the make and measures of al-

Of the master-pieces of ancient and modern statuary what may be observed? What differences of opinion have obtained among the partisans of proportional beauty themselves? Though these proportions are not the same, either in handsome men or women, yet what follows? On what are we requested to pause and reflect? How is the effect of this difference illustrated, and why?



most every part, you must conclude her not to be beautiful, in spite of the suggestions of your imagination; or, in obedience to your imagination, you must renounce your rules; you must lay by the scale and compass, and look out for some other cause of beauty; for, if beauty be attached to certain measures, which operate from a *principle in nature*, why should similar parts, with different measures of proportion, be found to have beauty, and this, too, in the very same species? But, to open our view a little, it is worth observing, that almost all animals have parts of very much the same nature, and destined nearly to the same purposes; a head, neck, body, feet, eyes, ears, nose, and mouth; yet Providence, to provide in the best manner for their several wants, and to display the riches of his wisdom and goodness in his creation, has worked out of these few and similar organs and members a diversity hardly short of infinite in their disposition, measures, and relation. But, as we have before observed, amid this infinite diversity, one particular is common to many species; several of the individuals which compose them are capable of affecting us with a sense of loveliness; and while they agree in producing this effect, they differ extremely in the relative measures of those parts which have produced it. These considerations were sufficient to induce me to reject the notion of any particular proportions that operated by nature to produce a pleasing effect; but those who will agree with me with regard to a particular proportion, are strongly prepossessed in favor of

Chasing the Great  
 Chain of Being

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In extending our view, what is worth observing? But amid this infinite diversity, what principle is common to many species? For what were these considerations sufficient? What do those imagine who are still *strongly prepossessed* in favor of an indefinite proportion?

one more indefinite. They imagine, that although beauty in general is annexed to no certain measures common to the several kinds of pleasing plants and animals, yet that there is a certain proportion in each species absolutely essential to the beauty of that particular kind. If we consider the animal world in general, we find beauty confined to no certain measures; but, as some peculiar measure and relation of parts is what distinguishes each peculiar class of animals, it must, of necessity, be that the beautiful in each kind will be found in the measures and proportions of that kind; for otherwise it would deviate from its proper species, and become in some sort monstrous: However, no species is so strictly confined to any certain proportions that there is not a considerable variation among the individuals; and as it has been shown of the human, so it may be shown of the brute kinds, that beauty is found indifferently in all the proportions which each kind can admit, without quitting its common form; and it is this idea of common form that makes the proportion of parts at all regarded, and not the operation of any natural cause: indeed, a little consideration will make it appear that it is not measure, but manner that creates all the beauty which belongs to shape. What light do we borrow from these boasted proportions when we study ornamental design? It seems amazing to me that artists, if they were as well convinced as they pretend to be that proportion is a principal cause of beauty, have not by them at all times accurate measurements of all sorts of beautiful animals, to

In considering the animal world in general, what do we find? As some peculiar measure and relation of parts is what distinguishes each peculiar class of animals, what necessarily follows? What is it that makes the proportion of parts at all regarded? A little consideration will make what appear? What seems a matter of amazement, and why?

help them to proper proportions when they would contrive any thing elegant, especially as they frequently assert that it is from an observation of the beautiful in nature they direct their practice. I know that it has been said long since, and echoed backward and forward from one writer to another a thousand times, that the proportions of building have been taken from those of the human body. To make this forced analogy complete, they represent a man with his arms raised and extended at full length, and then describe a sort of square, as it is formed by passing lines along the extremities of this strange figure. But it appears very clearly to me that the human figure never supplied the architect with any of his ideas; for, in the first place, men are very rarely seen in this strained posture; it is not natural to them, neither is it at all becoming. Secondly, the view of the human figure so disposed does not naturally suggest the idea of a square, but rather of a cross, as that large space between the arms and the ground must be filled with something before it can make any body think of a square. Thirdly, several buildings are by no means of the form of that particular square, which are, notwithstanding, planned by the best architects, and produce an effect altogether as good, and perhaps a better. And certainly nothing could be more unaccountably whimsical than for an architect to model his performance by the human figure, since no two things can have less resemblance or analogy than a man and a house or temple: do we need to observe that their purposes are entirely differ-

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What has long since been said? How is this forced analogy made complete? From what considerations does it appear evident that the human figure never supplied the architect with any of his ideas? Why would it be whimsical for an architect to model his performance by the human figure?

ent? What I am apt to suspect is this, that these analogies were devised to give a credit to the works of art, by showing a conformity between them and the noblest works in nature; not that the latter served at all to supply hints for the perfection of the former. And I am the more fully convinced that the patrons of proportion have transferred their artificial ideas to nature, and not borrowed from thence the proportions they use in works of art; because, in any discussion of this subject, they always quit, as soon as possible, the open field of natural beauties, the animal and vegetable kingdoms, and fortify themselves within the artificial lines and angles of architecture; for there is in mankind an unfortunate propensity to make themselves, their views, and their works, the measure of excellence in every thing whatsoever. Therefore, having observed that their dwellings were most commodious and firm when they were thrown into regular figures, with parts answerable to each other, they transferred these ideas to their gardens; they turned their trees into pillars, pyramids, and obelisks; they formed their hedges into so many green walls, and fashioned the walks into squares, triangles, and other mathematical figures, with exactness and symmetry; and they thought, if they were not imitating, they were at least improving Nature, and teaching her to know her business. But Nature has at last escaped from their discipline and their fetters; and our gardens, if nothing else, declare we begin to feel that mathematical ideas are not the true measures of beauty. And surely they

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For what purpose is it probable that these analogies were devised? Of what is our author fully convinced, and why? What unfortunate propensity is there in mankind? How is this remark illustrated? From what has Nature escaped? and what is the consequence?

are full as little so in the animal as the vegetable world : for is it not extraordinary that, in these fine descriptive pieces, these innumerable odes and elegies, which are in the mouths of all the world, and many of which have been the entertainment of ages—that in these pieces, which describe love with so passionate an energy, and represent its objects in so infinite a variety of lights, not one word is said of proportion, if it be, what some insist it is, the principal component of beauty ; while, at the same time, several other qualities are very frequently and warmly mentioned ? But, if proportion has not this power, it may appear odd how men came originally to be so prepossessed in its favor. It arose, I imagine, from the fondness I have just mentioned, which men bear so remarkably to their own works and notions ; it arose from false reasonings on the effects of the customary figure of animals ; it arose from the Platonic theory of fitness and aptitude ; for which reason, in the next section, I shall consider the effects of custom in the figure of animals ; and, afterward, the idea of fitness ; since, if proportion does not operate by a natural power attending some measures, it must be either by custom or the idea of utility ; there is no other way.

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## SECTION V.

### PROPORTION FARTHER CONSIDERED.

If I am not mistaken, a great deal of the prejudice

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How does it appear that they are full as little so in the animal as in the vegetable world ? How, then, came men to be so prepossessed in favor of proportion ? What shall, therefore, be the subject of the next section ?

*From what has a great deal of the prejudice in favor of proportion arisen ?*

in favor of proportion has arisen, not so much from the observation of any certain measures found in beautiful bodies, as from a wrong idea of the relation which deformity bears to beauty, to which it has been considered as the opposite: on this principle it was concluded that, where the causes of deformity were removed, beauty must naturally and necessarily be introduced. This, I believe, is a mistake; for *deformity* is opposed, not to beauty, but to the *complete common form*. If one of the legs of a man be found shorter than the other, the man is deformed, because there is something wanting to complete the whole idea we form of a man; and this has the same effect, in natural faults, as maiming and mutilation produced from accidents. So, if the back be humped, the man is deformed; because his back has an unusual figure, and what carries with it the idea of some disease or misfortune: so. if a man's neck be considerably longer or shorter than usual, we say he is deformed in that part, because men are not commonly made in that manner. But surely every hour's experience may convince us that a man may have his legs of an equal length, and resembling each other in all respects; and his neck of a just size, and his back quite straight, without having, at the same time, the least perceivable beauty. Indeed, beauty is so far from belonging to the idea of custom, that, in reality, what affects us in that manner is extremely rare and uncommon. The beautiful strikes us as much by its novelty as the deformed itself. It is thus in those species of animals with which we are acquainted; and, if one of a new species were represent-

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On this principle, what was concluded? Why is this a mistake? and how is it illustrated from a man's leg, back, or neck? But of what may every hour's experience convince us? How does the beautiful strike us?

ed, we should by no means wait until custom had settled an idea of proportion before we decided concerning its beauty or ugliness; which shows that the general idea of beauty can be no more owing to customary than to natural proportion. Deformity arises from the want of the common proportions; but the necessary result of their existence in any object is not beauty.

If we suppose proportion in natural things to be relative to custom and use, the nature of use and custom will show that beauty, which is a *positive* and powerful quality, can not result from it. We are so wonderfully formed, that, while we are creatures vehemently desirous of novelty, we are as strongly attached to habit and custom. But it is the nature of things which hold us by custom to affect us very little while we are in possession of them, but strongly when they are absent. I remember to have frequented a certain place every day, for a long time together; and I may truly say that, so far from finding pleasure in it, I was affected with a sort of weariness and disgust; I came, I went, I returned, without pleasure; yet, if by any means I passed by the usual time of going thither, I was remarkably uneasy, and was not quiet till I had got into my old track. They who use snuff take it almost without being sensible that they take it, and the acute sense of smell is deadened so as to feel hardly any thing from so sharp a stimulus; yet, deprive the snuff-taker of his box, and he is the most uneasy mortal in the world. Indeed, so far are use and habit

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What shows that the general idea of beauty is not more owing to customary than to natural proportion? From what does deformity arise? Why, then, is not beauty the necessary result of their existence in any object? What results from the wonderful manner in which we are formed? How do things which we hold by custom affect us? How is this remark illustrated?

from being causes of pleasure, merely as such, that ~~the~~ effect of constant use is to make all things, of whatever kind, entirely unaffecting: for, as use at last takes off the painful effect of many things, it reduces the pleasurable effect of others in the same manner, and brings both to a sort of mediocrity and indifference. Very justly is use called a second nature; and our natural and common state is one of absolute indifference, equally prepared for pain or pleasure. But when we are thrown out of this state, or deprived of any thing requisite to maintain us in it; when this change does not happen by pleasure from some mechanical cause, we are always hurt. It is so with the second nature, custom, in all things which relate to it. Thus, the want of the usual proportions in men and other animals is sure to disgust, though their presence is by no means any cause of real pleasure. It is true that the proportions laid down as causes of beauty in the human body are frequently found in beautiful ones, because they are generally found in all mankind; but if it can be shown, too, that they are found without beauty, and that beauty frequently exists without them, and that this beauty, where it exists, always can be assigned to other less equivocal causes, it will naturally lead us to conclude that proportion and beauty are not ideas of the same nature. The true opposite to beauty is not disproportion or deformity, but ugliness; and, as it proceeds from causes opposite to those of positive beauty, we can not consider it until

What is the effect of constant use, and why? What is use very justly called? and of our natural and common state, what is remarked? What effect is produced when we are thrown out of this state? How does it appear that it is so with custom in all things? As the proportions laid down as causes of beauty in the human body are frequently found in beautiful ones, why is this no argument against our doctrine? What is the true opposite to beauty? and why can we not consider it at present?



we come to treat of that. Between beauty and ugliness there is a sort of mediocrity, in which the assigned proportions are most commonly found; but this has no effect upon the passions.

## SECTION VI.

### FITNESS NOT THE CAUSE OF BEAUTY.

It is said that the idea of utility, or of a part being well adapted to answer its end, is the cause of beauty, or, indeed, beauty itself. If it were not for this opinion, it had been impossible for the doctrine of proportion to have held its ground very long; the world would be soon weary of hearing of measures which related to nothing either of a natural principle, or of a fitness to answer some end: the idea which mankind most commonly conceive of proportion is the suitableness of means to certain ends, and where this is not the question, very seldom trouble themselves about the effect of different measures of things: therefore it was necessary for this theory to insist, that not only artificial, but natural objects took their beauty from the fitness of the parts for their several purposes. But, in framing this theory, I am apprehensive that experience was not sufficiently consulted; for, on that principle, the wedge-like snout of a swine, with its tough cartilage at the end, the little sunk eyes, and the whole make of the head, so well adapted to its offices of dig-

Between beauty and ugliness what is found?

Of utility, what idea has prevailed? What has been the effect of this opinion? Of what would the world soon be weary of hearing? What idea do mankind most commonly conceive of proportion? To support this theory, what was necessary? From what examples does it appear evident that experience was not consulted in framing this theory?

ging and rooting, would be extremely beautiful. The great bag hanging to the bill of a pelican, a thing highly useful to this animal, would be likewise beautiful in our eyes. The hedgehog, so well secured against all assaults by his prickly hide, and the porcupine with his missile quills, would be then considered as creatures of no small elegance. There are few animals whose parts are better contrived than those of a monkey: he has the hands of a man, joined to the springy limbs of a beast: he is admirably calculated for running, leaping, grappling, and climbing; and yet there are few animals which seem to have less beauty in the eyes of all mankind. I need say little on the trunk of the elephant, of such various usefulness, and which is so far from contributing to his beauty. How well fitted is the wolf for running and leaping! how admirably is the lion armed for battle! but will any one, therefore, call the elephant, the wolf, and the ~~lion~~ beautiful animals? I believe no body will think the form of a man's legs so well adapted to running as those of a horse, a dog, a deer, and several other creatures; at least they have not that appearance: yet I believe a well-fashioned human leg will be allowed far to exceed all these in beauty. If the fitness of parts were what constituted the loveliness of their form, the actual employment of them would undoubtedly much augment it; but this, though it is sometimes so upon another principle, is far from being always the case. A bird on the wing is not so beautiful as when it is perched; nay, there are several of the domestic fowls which are seldom seen to fly, and which are not the less beautiful on that account; yet birds are so extremely different in their form from

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If the fitness of parts were what constituted the loveliness of the form, what would follow? How does it appear evident that this is not the case?

the beast and human kinds, that you can not, on the principle of fitness, allow them any thing agreeable, but in consideration of their parts being designed for quite other purposes. I never in my life chanced to see a peacock fly; and yet before, very long before I considered any aptitude in his form for the aerial life, I was struck with the extreme beauty which raises that bird above many of the best flying fowls in the world, though, for any thing I saw, his way of living was much like that of the swine which fed in the farm-yard along with him. The same may be said of cocks, hens, and the like; they are of the flying kind in figure, in their manner of moving not very different from men and beasts. To leave these foreign examples: if beauty in our own species was annexed to use, men would be much more lovely than women, and strength and agility would be considered as the only beauties. But to call strength by the name of beauty, to have but one denomination for the qualities of a Venus and Hercules, so totally different in almost all respects, is surely a strange confusion of ideas, or abuse of words. The cause of this confusion, I imagine, proceeds from our frequently perceiving the parts of the human and other animal bodies to be at once very beautiful, and very well adapted to their purposes; and we are deceived by a sophism, which makes us take that for a cause which is only a concomitant: this is the sophism of the fly, who imagined he raised a great dust, because he stood upon the chariot that really raised it. The stomach, the lungs, the liver, as well as other parts, are in-

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Of the peacock, what is observed? Of what may the same be said? Of beauty in our own species being annexed to use, what is remarked? What is really a strange confusion of ideas, or abuse of words? From what does the cause of this confusion proceed? and how illustrated?

comparably well adapted to their purposes ; yet they are far from having any beauty. Again : many things are very beautiful, in which it is impossible to discern any idea of use. And I appeal to the first and most natural feelings of mankind, whether, on beholding a beautiful eye, or a well-fashioned mouth, or a well-turned leg, any ideas of their being well fitted for seeing, eating, or running, ever present themselves? What idea of use is it that flowers excite, the most beautiful part of the vegetable world ? It is true that the infinitely wise and good Creator has, of his bounty, frequently joined beauty to those things which he has made useful to us, but this does not prove that an idea of use and beauty are the same thing, or that they are any way dependent on each other.

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## SECTION VII.

### THE REAL EFFECTS OF FITNESS.

WHEN I excluded proportion and fitness from any share in beauty, I did not, by any means, intend to say that they were of no value, or that they ought to be disregarded in works of art. Works of art are the proper sphere of their power ; and here it is that they have their full effect. Whenever the wisdom of our Creator intended that we should be affected with any thing, he did not confine the execution of his design to the languid and precarious operation of our reason ; but

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Farther to illustrate this subject, to what does our author appeal ? What is acknowledged ? but what does this not prove ?

What was not intended to be said when proportion and fitness were excluded from any share in beauty, and why ? Whenever the wisdom of our Creator intended that we should be affected with any thing, with what did he endue our reason ?

he endued it with powers and properties that prevent the understanding, and even the will, which, seizing upon the senses and imagination, captivate the soul before the understanding is ready either to join with them or to oppose them. It is by a long deduction and much study that we discover the adorable wisdom of God in his works: when we discover it, the effect is very different, not only in the manner of acquiring it, but in its own nature, from that which strikes us without any preparation from the sublime or the beautiful. How different is the satisfaction of the anatomist, who discovers the use of the muscles and of the skin, the excellent contrivance of the one for the various movements of the body, and the wonderful texture of the other, at once a general covering, and at once a general outlet as well as inlet; how different is this from the affection which possesses an ordinary man at the sight of a delicate, smooth skin, and all the other parts of beauty, which require no investigation to be perceived! In the former case, while we look up to the Maker with admiration and praise, the object which causes it may be odious and distasteful; the latter very often so touches us by its power on the imagination, that we examine but little into the artifice of its contrivance; and we have need of a strong effort of our reason to disentangle our minds from the allurements of the object to a consideration of that wisdom which invented so powerful a machine. The effect of proportion and fitness, at least so far as they proceed from a mere consideration of the work itself,

How is it that we discover the adorable wisdom of God in his works? When we do discover it, from what is the effect very different? From the discoveries of the anatomist, and an ordinary man, how is this illustrated? What is the effect of the former, and of the latter? What effect do proportion and fitness produce?

produce approbation, the acquiescence of the understanding, but not love, nor any passion of that species.

When we examine the structure of a watch, when we come to know thoroughly the use of every part of it, satisfied as we are with the fitness of the whole, we are far enough from perceiving any thing like beauty in the watchwork itself; but let us look on the case, the labor of some curious artist in engraving, with little or no idea of use, we shall have a much livelier idea of beauty than we ever could have had from the watch itself, though the master-piece of Graham. In beauty, as I said, the effect is previous to any knowledge of the use; but to judge of proportion, we must know the end for which any work is designed.

According to the end the proportion varies. Thus, there is one proportion of a tower, another of a house; one proportion of a gallery, another of a hall, another of a chamber. To judge of the proportions of these, you must be first acquainted with the purposes for which they were designed. Good sense and experience, acting together, find out what is fit to be done in every work of art. We are rational creatures, and in all our works we ought to regard their end and purpose; the gratification of any passion, how innocent soever, ought only to be of secondary consideration. Herein is placed the real power of fitness and proportion; they operate on the understanding considering them, which approves the work, and acquiesces in it. The passions, and the imagination, which principally raises

How is this remark illustrated in the examination of a watch? In beauty, to what is the effect previous? To judge of proportion, what knowledge is necessary? How is this illustrated? By what do we find out what is fit to be done in every work of art? Being rational creatures in all our works, what ought we to regard, and why? Herein is placed what? and on what do they operate? Of the passions and the imagination, what is observed?

them, have here very little to do. When a room appears in its original nakedness, bare walls and plain ceiling, let its proportion be ever so excellent, it pleases very little; a cold approbation is the utmost we can reach: a much worse-proportioned room, with elegant mouldings and fine festoons, glasses, and other merely ornamental furniture, will make the imagination revolt against the reason; it will please much more than the naked proportion of the first room, which the understanding has so much approved as admirably fitted for its purposes. What I have here said, and before, concerning proportion, is by no means to persuade people absurdly to neglect the idea of use in the works of art. It is only to show that these excellent things, beauty and proportion, are not the same; not that they should either of them be disregarded.

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## SECTION VIII.

### THE RECAPITULATION.

On the whole: if such parts in human bodies as are found proportioned were likewise constantly found beautiful, as they certainly are not; or if they were so situated as that a pleasure might flow from the comparison, which they seldom are; or if any assignable proportions were found, either in plants or animals, which were always attended with beauty, which never was the case; or if, where parts were well adapted to their purposes, they were constantly beautiful, and, when no use appeared, there was no beauty, which is

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What illustration follows? For what is what is here said intended?

Under what circumstances might we conclude that beauty consists in *proportion or utility*?

contrary to all experience, we might conclude that beauty consisted in proportion or utility. But since, in all respects, the case is quite otherwise, we may be satisfied that beauty does not depend on these, let it owe its origin to what else it will.

## SECTION IX.

### PERFECTION NOT THE CAUSE OF BEAUTY.

THERE is another notion current, pretty closely allied to the former, that Perfection is the constituent cause of beauty. This opinion has been made to extend much farther than to sensible objects. But in these, so far is perfection, considered as such, from being the cause of beauty, that this quality, where it is highest, in the female sex, almost always carries with it an idea of weakness and imperfection. Women are very sensible of this; for which reason they learn to lisp, to totter in their walk, to counterfeit weakness, and even sickness. In all this they are guided by nature. Beauty in distress is much the most affecting beauty. Blushing has little less power; and modesty in general, which is a tacit allowance of imperfection, is itself considered as an amiable quality, and certainly heightens every other that is so. I know it is in every body's mouth that we ought to love perfection. This is to me a sufficient proof that it is not the proper object of love.

But since the case is quite otherwise, of what may we be satisfied?

What other notion, closely allied to the former, is current? How does it appear that perfection, considered as such, is not the cause of beauty in sensible objects? What evidence have we that women are sensible of this? In all this, by what are they guided, and why? Of blushing and modesty what is observed? Of what is the common remark, that we ought to love perfection, a sufficient proof, and why?



Who ever said we *ought* to love a fine woman, or even any of those beautiful animals which please us? Here, to be affected, there is no need of the concurrence of our will.

## SECTION X.

### HOW FAR THE IDEA OF BEAUTY MAY BE APPLIED TO THE QUALITIES OF THE MIND.

NOR is this remark, in general, less applicable to the qualities of the mind. Those virtues which cause admiration, and are of the sublimer kind, produce terror rather than love; such as fortitude, justice, wisdom, and the like. Never was any man amiable by force of these qualities. Those which engage our hearts, which impress us with a sense of loveliness, are the softer virtues; easiness of temper, compassion, kindness, and liberality; though certainly those latter are of less immediate and momentous concern to society, and of less dignity. But it is for that reason that they are so amiable. The great virtues turn principally on dangers, punishments, and troubles, and are exercised rather in preventing the worst mischiefs than in dispensing favors; and are therefore not lovely, though highly venerable. The subordinate turn on reliefs, gratifications, and indulgences; and are therefore more lovely, though inferior in dignity. Those persons who creep into the hearts of most people, who are chosen as the companions of their softer hours, and their re-

From what does it appear that the preceding remark is not less applicable to the mind? Which are the virtues that engage our hearts? and what is said of them? Upon what do the great virtues principally turn? and how are they exercised? Upon what do the subordinate turn? What persons are most apt to be chosen as the companions of our softer hours?

liefs from care and anxiety, are never persons of shining qualities nor strong virtues. It is rather the soft green of the soul on which we rest our eyes, that are fatigued with beholding more glaring objects. It is worth observing how we feel ourselves affected in reading the characters of Cæsar and Cato, as they are so finely drawn and contrasted in Sallust. In one, the *ignoscendo, largiundo*; in the other, *nil largiundo*. In one, the *miseris perfugium*; in the other, *malis perniciem*. In the latter we have much to admire, much to reverence, and perhaps something to fear; we respect him, but we respect him at a distance. The former makes us familiar with him; we love him, and he leads us whither he pleases. To draw things closer to our first and most natural feelings, I will add a remark made upon reading this section by an ingenious friend. The authority of a father, so useful to our well-being, and so justly venerable upon all accounts, hinders us from having that entire love for him that we have for our mothers, where the paternal authority is almost melted down into the mother's fondness and indulgence. But we generally have a great love for our grandfathers, in whom this authority is removed a degree from us, and where the weakness of age mellows it into something of a feminine partiality.

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On what is it that we rest our eyes? By what examples are these remarks illustrated? In the latter what have we? and what have we in the former? To draw things closer to our first and most natural feelings, what remark is added?

## SECTION XI.

HOW FAR THE IDEA OF BEAUTY MAY BE APPLIED TO  
VIRTUE.

FROM what has been said in the foregoing section, we may easily see how far the application of beauty to virtue may be made with propriety. The general application of this quality to virtue has a strong tendency to confound our ideas of things, and it has given rise to an infinite deal of whimsical theory ; as affixing the name of beauty to proportion, congruity, and perfection, as well as to qualities of things yet more remote from our natural ideas of it, and from one another, has tended to confound our ideas of beauty, and left us no standard or rule to judge by that was not even more uncertain and fallacious than our own fancies. This loose and inaccurate manner of speaking has, therefore, misled us both in the theory of taste and of morals ; and induced us to remove the science of our duties from their proper bases (our reason, our relations, and our necessities), to rest it upon foundations altogether visionary and unsubstantial.

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## SECTION XII.

## THE REAL CAUSE OF BEAUTY.

HAVING endeavored to show what beauty is not, it remains that we should examine, at least with equal

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From what has been said in the foregoing section, what may we easily see? To what has the general application of this quality to virtue a strong tendency? and to what has it given rise? How is this illustrated? What has been the effect of this loose and inaccurate manner of speaking?

*Having endeavored to show what beauty is not, what remains?*

attention, in what it really consists. Beauty is a thing much too affecting not to depend on some positive qualities. ✓ And, since it is no creature of our reason, since it strikes us without any reference to use, and even where no use at all can be discerned, since the order and method of nature are generally very different from our measures and proportions, we must conclude that beauty is, for the greater part, some quality in bodies acting mechanically upon the human mind by the intervention of the senses. We ought, therefore, to consider attentively in what manner those sensible qualities are disposed, in such things as, by experience, we find beautiful, or which excite in us the passion of love, or some correspondent affection

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### SECTION XIII.

#### BEAUTIFUL OBJECTS SMALL.

THE most obvious point that presents itself to us in examining any object is its extent or quantity. And what degree of extent prevails in bodies that are held beautiful may be gathered from the usual manner of expression concerning it. I am told that, in most languages, the objects of love are spoken of under diminutive epithets. It is so in all the languages of which I have any knowledge. In Greek, the *ων* and other diminutive terms are almost always the terms of affec-

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Of beauty what is said? Why must we conclude that it is some quality in bodies acting mechanically upon the human mind by the intervention of the senses? What ought we, therefore, attentively to consider?

What is the most obvious point that presents itself in examining any object? How may we gather the degree of extent that prevails in bodies that are beautiful? In most languages, how are the objects of love spoken of? What evidence have we of this from the Greeks and Romans?

tion and tenderness. These diminutives were commonly added by the Greeks to the names of persons with whom they conversed on the terms of friendship and familiarity. Though the Romans were a people of less quick and delicate feelings, yet they naturally slid into the lessening termination upon the same occasions. Anciently, in the English language, the diminishing *ling* was added to the names of persons and things that were the objects of love. Some we retain still, as *darling* (or little dear), and a few others. But to this day, in ordinary conversation, it is usual to add the endearing name of *little* to every thing we love: the French and Italians make use of these affectionate diminutives even more than we do. In the animal creation, out of our own species, it is the small we are inclined to be fond of; little birds, and some of the smaller kinds of beasts. A great beautiful thing is a manner of expression scarcely ever used; but that of a great ugly thing is very common. There is a wide difference between admiration and love. The sublime, which is the cause of the former, always dwells on great objects, and terrible; the latter on small ones, and pleasing: we submit to what we admire, but we love what submits to us; in one case we are forced, in the other we are flattered, into compliance. In short, the ideas of the sublime and the beautiful stand on foundations so different, that it is hard, I had almost

Anciently, in the English language, what termination prevailed? and what example still remains? What endearing epithet do we still use in ordinary conversation? What nations make use of these diminutives even more than we do? In animal creation, of which are we inclined to be fond? What manner of expression is scarcely ever used? Between what is there a wide difference? On what does the sublime dwell? and on what love? How do we regard that to which we submit, and that which submits to us? What consequence results from the different objects on which the sublime and beautiful stand?

said impossible, to think of reconciling them in the same subject, without considerably lessening the effect of the one or the other upon the passions: so that, attending to their quantity, beautiful objects are comparatively small.

## SECTION XIV.

### SMOOTHNESS.

THE next property constantly observable in such objects is *smoothness* :\* a quality so essential to beauty, that I do not now recollect any thing beautiful that is not smooth. In trees and flowers, smooth leaves are beautiful; smooth slopes of earth in gardens; smooth streams in the landscape; smooth coats of birds and beasts in animal beauties; in fine women, smooth skins; and in several sorts of ornamental furniture, smooth and polished surfaces. A very considerable part of the effect of beauty is owing to this quality; indeed, the most considerable; for, take any beautiful object, and give it a broken and rugged surface, and, however well formed it may be in other respects, it pleases no longer: whereas, let it want ever so many of the other constituents, if it wants not this, it becomes more pleasing than almost all the others without it. This seems to me so evident, that I am a good deal surprised that none who have handled the subject have made any mention of the quality of smoothness in the enumera-

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What examples are given to illustrate the remark that smoothness is essential to beauty? How does it appear that the most considerable part of the effect of beauty is owing to this quality? From the manifest truth of this remark, at what are we surprised, and why?

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\* Part iv., sect. xxi.

tion of those that go to the forming of beauty; for, indeed, any rugged, any sudden projection, any sharp angle, is in the highest degree contrary to that idea.

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## SECTION XV.

### GRADUAL VARIATION.

BUT, as perfectly beautiful bodies are not composed of angular parts, so their parts never continue long in the same right line.\* They vary their direction every moment, and they change under the eye by a deviation continually carrying on, but for whose beginning or end you will find it difficult to ascertain a point. The view of a beautiful bird will illustrate this observation. Here we see the head increasing insensibly to the middle, from whence it lessens gradually, until it mixes with the neck; the neck loses itself in a larger swell, which continues to the middle of the body, when the whole decreases again to the tail: the tail takes a new direction, but it soon varies its new course: it blends again with the other parts; and the line is perpetually changing, above, below, upon every side. In this description, I have before me the idea of a dove; it agrees very well with most of the conditions of beauty. It is smooth and downy; its parts are (to use that expression) melted into one another: you are presented with no sudden protuberance through the whole, and yet the whole is continually changing. Observe

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Why do not the parts of perfectly beautiful bodies continue long in the same right line? How do they vary? What will illustrate this remark? and in what manner? In this description, what example is contemplated? and what is farther observed of it?

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\* Part v., sect. xxiii.

that part of a beautiful woman, where she is, perhaps, the most beautiful, about the neck and breasts : the smoothness : the softness ; the easy and insensible swell ; the variety of the surface, which is never, for the smallest space, the same ; the deceitful maze, through which the unsteady eye slides giddily, without knowing where to fix or whither it is carried. Is not this a demonstration of that change of surface, continual, and yet hardly perceptible at any point, which forms one of the great constituents of beauty ? It gives me no small pleasure to find that I can strengthen my theory in this point by the opinion of the very ingenious Mr. Hogarth, whose idea of the line of beauty I take, in general, to be extremely just ; but the idea of variation, without attending so accurately to the *manner* of the variation, has led him to consider angular figures as beautiful : these figures, it is true, vary greatly ; yet they vary in a sudden and broken manner ; and I do not find any natural object which is angular, and, at the same time, beautiful. Indeed, few natural objects are entirely angular ; but I think those which approach the most nearly to it are the ugliest. I must add, too, that, so far as I could observe of nature, though the varied line is that alone in which complete beauty is found, yet there is no particular line which is always found in the most completely beautiful, and which is therefore beautiful in preference to all other lines : at least, I never could observe it.

What other example is given to illustrate the same remark ? Of what is this a demonstration ? By whose authority is our author's opinion here strengthened ? What led him to consider angular figures beautiful ? Why are they not beautiful ? What observation follows ?



## SECTION XVI.

## DELICACY.

AN air of robustness and strength is very prejudicial to beauty. An appearance of *delicacy*, and even of fragility, is almost essential to it. Whoever examines the vegetable or animal creation, will find this observation to be founded in nature. It is not the oak, the ash, or the elm, or any of the robust trees of the forest, which we consider as beautiful; they are awful and majestic; they inspire a sort of reverence. It is the delicate myrtle, it is the orange, it is the almond, it is the jasmine, it is the vine, which we look on as vegetable beauties. It is the flowery species, so remarkable for its weakness and momentary duration, that gives us the liveliest idea of beauty and elegance. Among animals, the greyhound is more beautiful than the mastiff; and the delicacy of a gennet, a barb, or an Arabian horse, is much more amiable than the strength and stability of some horses of war or carriage. I need here say little of the fair sex, where I believe the point will be easily allowed me. The beauty of women is considerably owing to their weakness or delicacy, and is even enhanced by their timidity, a quality of mind analogous to it. I would not here be understood to say that weakness, betraying very bad health, has any share in beauty; but the ill effect of this is not because it is weakness, but because the ill state of health, which produces such weakness, alters the other conditions of

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What is always essential to beauty? How may this observation be found to be founded in nature? What examples of illustration are given? Among animals, what examples are given? Of what need little here be said, and why? Whence arises the ill effect of that weakness which betrays very bad health?

beauty; the parts, in such a case, collapse; the bright color, the *lumen purpureum juventæ*, is gone; and the fine variation is lost in wrinkles, sudden breaks, and right lines.

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## SECTION XVII.

### BEAUTY IN COLOR.

As to the colors usually found in beautiful bodies, it may be somewhat difficult to ascertain them, because, in the several parts of nature, there is an infinite variety. However, even in this variety we may mark out something on which to settle. First, the colors of beautiful bodies must not be dusky or muddy, but clean and fair. Secondly, they must not be of the strongest kind. Those which seem most appropriated to beauty are the milder of every sort: light greens; soft blues; weak whites; pink reds, and violets. Thirdly, if the colors be strong and vivid, they are always diversified, and the object is never of one strong color; there are almost always such a number of them (as in variegated flowers), that the strength and glare of each is considerably abated. In a fine complexion, there is not only some variety in the coloring, but the colors; neither the red nor the white is strong and glaring. Besides, they are mixed in such a manner, and with such gradations, that it is impossible to fix the bounds. On the same principle it is that the dubious color in the necks and tails of peacocks, and about the heads of

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Why may it be difficult to ascertain the colors usually found in beautiful bodies? In this variety, however, in the 1st, 2d, and 3d color, what may we mark out? Of the colors of a fine complexion, what is observed? What, on the same principle, is so very agreeable?

drakes, is so very agreeable. In reality, the beauty, both of shape and coloring, are as nearly related as we can well suppose it possible for things of such different natures to be.

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## SECTION XVIII.

### RECAPITULATION.

ON the whole, the qualities of beauty, as they are merely sensible qualities, are the following: First, to be comparatively small. Secondly, to be smooth. Thirdly, to have a variety in the direction of the parts; but, fourthly, to have those parts not angular, but melted, as it were, into each other. Fifthly, to be of a delicate frame, without any remarkable appearance of strength. Sixthly, to have its colors clear and bright, but not very strong and glaring. Seventhly, or if it should have any glaring color, to have it diversified with others. These are, I believe, the properties on which beauty depends; properties that operate by nature, and are less liable to be altered by caprice, or confounded by a diversity of tastes, than any other.

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## SECTION XIX.

### THE PHYSIOGNOMY.

THE *physiognomy* has a considerable share in beauty, especially in that of our own species. The man-

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Of the beauty both of shape and coloring, what is observed?

What are the seven properties on which beauty depends? What is said of them?

Of the *physiognomy* what is observed?

ners give a certain determination to the countenance ; which, being observed to correspond pretty regularly with them, is capable of joining the effects of certain agreeable qualities of the mind to those of the body : so that, to form a finished human beauty, and to give it its full influence, the face must be expressive of such gentle and amiable qualities as correspond with the softness, smoothness, and delicacy of the outward form.

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## SECTION XX.

### THE EYE.

I HAVE hitherto purposely omitted to speak of the *eye*, which has so great a share in the beauty of the animal creation, as it did not fall so easily under the foregoing heads, though, in fact, it is reducible to the same principles. I think, then, that the beauty of the eye consists, first, in its *clearness* : what *colored eye* shall please most, depends a good deal on particular fancies ; but none are pleased with any eye whose water (to use that term) is dull and muddy.\* We are pleased with the eye in this view, on the principle upon which we like diamonds, clear water, glass, and such like transparent substances. Secondly, the motion of the eye contributes to its beauty, by continually shifting its directions ; but a slow and languid motion is more beautiful than a brisk one : the latter is enliven-

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What do the manners give to the countenance ? and what is said of it ? To form a finished human beauty, what is requisite ?

Why has our author hitherto omitted to speak of the eye ? In what does its beauty in the first place consist ? Of the color of the eye, what is observed ? On what principle are we pleased with a clear eye ? Of its motion, what is observed ?

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\* Part iv., sect. xxv.

ing, the former lovely. Thirdly, with regard to the union of the eye with the neighboring parts, it is to hold the same rule that is given of other beautiful ones; it is not to make a strong deviation from the line of the neighboring parts, nor to verge into any exact geometrical figure. Besides all this, the eye affects, as it is expressive of some qualities of the mind, and its principal power generally arises from this; so that what we have just said of the physiognomy is applicable here.

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## SECTION XXI.

### UGLINESS.

It may, perhaps, appear like a sort of repetition of what we have before said to insist here upon the nature of ugliness, as I imagine it to be in all respects the opposite to those qualities which we have laid down for the constituents of beauty. But, though ugliness be the opposite of beauty, it is not the opposite to proportion and fitness; for it is possible that a thing may be very ugly with any proportions, and with a perfect fitness to any uses. Ugliness I imagine likewise to be consistent enough with an idea of the sublime; but I would by no means insinuate that ugliness, of itself, is a sublime idea, unless united with such qualities as excite a strong terror.

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In what, in the third place, does the beauty of the eye consist? From what does the principal power of the eye arise?

What may appear to be a sort of repetition, and why? Why is not ugliness the opposite to proportion and fitness? When only may ugliness be consistent with an idea of the sublime?

## SECTION XXII.

## GRACE.

GRACEFULNESS is an idea not very different from beauty; it consists in much the same things. Gracefulness is an idea belonging to *posture* and *motion*. In both these, to be graceful, it is requisite that there be no appearance of difficulty; there is required a small inflection of the body, and a composure of the parts in such a manner as not to encumber each other, nor to appear divided by sharp and sudden angles. In this case, this roundness, this delicacy of attitude and motion, is that in which all the magic of grace consists, and what is called its *je ne sais quoi*; as will be obvious to any observer who considers attentively the Venus de Medicis, the Antinous, or any statue generally allowed to be graceful in a high degree.

## SECTION XXIII.

## ELEGANCE AND SPECIOUSNESS.

WHEN any body is composed of parts smoothed and polished, without pressing upon each other, without showing any ruggedness or confusion, and at the same time affecting some regular shape, I call it elegant. It is closely allied to the beautiful, differing from it only in this *regularity*; which, however, as it makes a very material difference in the affection pro-

Of gracefulness, what is observed? To what does it belong? In both these, to be graceful, what is requisite? and what is required? How may it be made to appear evident that this is that in which all the magic of grace consists?

When is a body called elegant? In what does it differ from the beautiful? and why may it constitute another species?

duced, may very well constitute another species. Under this head I rank those delicate and regular works of art that imitate no determinate object in nature, as elegant buildings and pieces of furniture. When any object partakes of the above-mentioned qualities, or of those of beautiful bodies, and is, withal, of great dimensions, it is full as remote from the idea of mere beauty, I call it *fine* or *specious*.

## SECTION XXIV.

### THE BEAUTIFUL IN FEELING.

THE foregoing description of beauty, so far as it is taken in by the eye, may be greatly illustrated by describing the nature of objects which produce a similar effect through the touch. This I call the beautiful in *feeling*. It corresponds wonderfully with what causes the same species of pleasure to the sight. There is a chain in all our sensations; they are all but different sorts of feelings, calculated to be affected by various sorts of objects, but all to be affected after the same manner. All bodies that are pleasant to the touch are so by the slightness of the resistance they make. Resistance is either to motion along the surface, or to the pressure of the parts on one another: if the former be slight, we call the body smooth; if the latter, soft. The chief pleasure we receive by feeling is in the one

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Under this head, what are ranked? When is an object called *fine* or *specious*?

How may the foregoing description of beauty be illustrated? What is it called, and with what does it correspond? Of our sensations, what is remarked? In what manner are bodies pleasant to the touch? What are the two directions of resistance? Of the former and of the latter, what is observed?

or the other of these qualities ; and if there be a combination of both, our pleasure is greatly increased. This is so plain, that it is rather more fit to illustrate other things than to be illustrated itself by an example. The next source of pleasure in this sense, as in every other, is the continually presenting somewhat new ; and we find that bodies which continually vary their surface are much the most pleasant or beautiful to the feeling, as any one that pleases may experience. The third property in such objects is, that though the surface continually varies its direction, it never varies it suddenly. The application of any thing sudden, even though the impression itself have little or nothing of violence, is disagreeable. The quick application of a finger a little warmer or colder than usual, without notice, makes us start ; a slight tap on the shoulder, not expected, has the same effect. Hence it is that angular bodies, bodies that suddenly vary the direction of the outline, afford so little pleasure to the feeling. Every such change is a sort of climbing or falling in miniature ; so that squares, triangles, and other angular figures, are neither beautiful to the sight nor to the feeling. ¶ Whoever compares his state of mind on feeling soft, smooth, variegated, unangular bodies, with that in which he finds himself on the view of a beautiful object, will perceive a very striking analogy in the effects of both, and which may go a good way toward discovering their common cause. Feeling and

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What effect is produced by a combination of these qualities ? Of the evidence of this, what is observed ? What is the next source of pleasure in this sense ? What bodies are most pleasant or beautiful to the feeling ? What is the third property in such objects ? Of the application of any thing sudden, what is remarked ? How is this illustrated ? Hence, what bodies afford so little pleasure to the feeling, and why ? How may this be illustrated ?



sight, in this respect, differ in but a few points. The touch takes in the pleasure of softness, which is not primarily an object of sight; the sight, on the other hand, comprehends color, which can hardly be made perceptible to the touch: the touch, again, has the advantage in a new idea of pleasure resulting from a moderate degree of warmth; but the eye triumphs in the infinite extent and multiplicity of its objects. But there is such a similitude in the pleasures of these senses, that I am apt to fancy, if it were possible that one might discern color by feeling (as, it is said, some blind men have done), that the same colors, and the same disposition of coloring, which are found beautiful to the sight, would be found likewise most graceful to the touch. But, setting aside conjectures, let us pass to the other sense—of hearing.

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## SECTION XXV.

### THE BEAUTIFUL IN SOUNDS.

In this sense we find an equal aptitude to be affected in a soft and delicate manner; and how far sweet or beautiful sounds agree with our descriptions of beauty in other senses, the experience of every one must decide. Milton has described this species of music in one of his juvenile poems.\* I need not say that Milton was perfectly well versed in that art; and that no man had a finer ear, with a happier manner of express-

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How do feeling and sight in this respect differ? From the similitude in the pleasures of these senses, what are we apt to fancy?

Of beauty of sound, what is remarked? Who has described this species of music? and what is said of him?

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\* L'Allegro.

ing the affections of one sense by metaphors taken from another. The description is as follows :

"And ever against eating cares,  
Lap me in *soft* Lydian airs ;  
In notes with many a *winding* bout  
Of *linked sweetness long drawn out* ;  
With wanton head and giddy cunning,  
The *melting* voice through *mazes* running ;  
*Untwisting* all the chains that tie  
The hidden soul of harmony."

Let us parallel this with the softness, the winding surface, the unbroken continuance, the easy gradation of the beautiful in other things ; and all the diversities of the several senses, with all their several affections, will rather help to throw lights from one another, to finish one clear consistent idea of the whole, than to obscure it by their intricacy and variety.

To the above-mentioned description I shall add one or two remarks. The first is, that the beautiful in music will not bear that loudness and strength of sounds which may be used to raise other passions ; nor notes which are shrill, or harsh, or deep : it agrees best with such as are clear, even, smooth, and weak. The second is, that great variety, and quick transitions from one measure or tone to another, are contrary to the genius of the beautiful in music. Such transitions often excite mirth, or other sudden and tumultuous passions ; but not that sinking, that melting, that languor, which is the characteristic effect of the beautiful, as it regards every sense. The passion excited by beauty is, in fact, nearer to a species of melancholy than to jollity and mirth.

"I ne'er am merry when I hear sweet music."—SHAKESPEARE.

Recite the description ? What is said of this description ? To the above-mentioned description, what is the first remark that is added ? What is the second ? What is often the effect of such transitions ? What is the nature of the passions excited by beauty ?

I do not here mean to confine music to any one species of notes or tones, neither is it an art in which I can say I have any great skill. My sole design in this remark is to settle a consistent idea of beauty. The infinite variety of the affections of the soul will suggest to a good head and skillful ear a variety of such sounds as are fitted to raise them. It can be no prejudice to this to clear and distinguish some few particulars that belong to the same class, and are consistent with each other, from the immense crowd of different, and sometimes contradictory, ideas that rank vulgarly under the standard of beauty. And of these it is my intention to mark such only of the leading points as show the conformity of the sense of hearing with all the other senses in the article of their pleasures.

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## SECTION XXVI.

### TASTE AND SMELL.

THIS general agreement of the senses is yet more evident on minutely considering those of taste and smell. We metaphorically apply the idea of sweetness to sights and sounds; but, as the qualities of bodies, by which they are fitted to excite either pleasure or pain in these senses, are not so obvious as they are in the others, we shall refer an explanation of their analogy, which is a very close one, to that part wherein

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To what is music not meant to be confined? In this remark, what is the sole design? What will the infinite variety of the affections of the soul suggest to a good head and skillful ear? What can be no prejudice to this? Of these, what only are intended to be marked?

How will this general agreement of the senses become still more evident? To what do we metaphorically apply the idea of sweetness? Why is an *explanation of this analogy referred to another part of the work?*

we come to consider the common efficient cause of beauty as it regards all the senses. I do not think any thing better fitted to establish a clear and settled idea of visual beauty than this way of examining the similar pleasures of other senses ; for one part is sometimes clear in one of these senses, that is more obscure in another ; and, where there is a clear concurrence of all, we may with more certainty speak of any one of them. By this means they bear witness to each other ; nature is, as it were, scrutinized ; and we report nothing of her but what we receive from her own information.

## SECTION XXVII.

### THE SUBLIME AND BEAUTIFUL COMPARED.

On closing this general view of beauty, it naturally occurs that we should compare it with the sublime ; and, in this comparison, there appears a remarkable contrast ; for sublime objects are vast in their dimensions, beautiful ones comparatively small : beauty should be smooth and polished ; the great, rugged and negligent : beauty should shun the right line, yet deviate from it insensibly ; the great, in many cases, loves the right line, and when it deviates, it often makes a strong deviation ; beauty should not be obscure ; the great ought to be dark and gloomy : beauty should be light and delicate ; the great ought to be solid, and even massive. They are, indeed, ideas of a very different

Why is the examination of the similar pleasures of other senses the best way to establish a clear and settled idea of visual beauty ? What is its effect ?

On closing this general view of beauty, what naturally occurs to the mind ? What is the contrast that appears in this comparison ?

✓ nature, one being founded on pain, the other on pleasure; and, however they may vary afterward from the direct nature of their causes, yet these causes keep up an eternal distinction between them, a distinction never to be forgotten by any whose business it is to affect the passions. In the infinite variety of natural combinations, we must expect to find the qualities of things the most remote imaginable from each other united in the same object. We must expect, also, to find combinations of the same kind in the works of art. But when we consider the power of an object upon our passions, we must know that, when any thing is intended to affect the mind by the force of some predominant property, the affection produced is like to be the more uniform and perfect, if all the other properties or qualities of the object be of the same nature, and tending to the same design as the principal :

"If black and white blend, soften, and unite

A thousand ways, is there no black and white?"

If the qualities of the sublime and beautiful are sometimes found united, does this prove that they are the same; does it prove that they are any way allied; does it prove even that they are not opposite and contradictory? Black and white may soften, may blend, but they are not, therefore, the same. Nor, when they are so softened and blended with each other, or with different colors, is the power of black as black, or of white as white, so strong as when each stands uniform and distinguished.

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How does it appear that they are ideas of a very different nature? In the infinite variety of natural combinations, what must we expect to find? Where, also, must we expect to find combinations of the same kind? In considering the power of any object upon our passions, what must we know? *What is the closing remark?*

## PART IV.

## SECTION I.

## OF THE EFFICIENT CAUSE OF THE SUBLIME AND BEAUTIFUL.

WHEN I say I intend to inquire into the efficient cause of sublimity and beauty, I would not be understood to say that I can come to the ultimate cause. I do not pretend that I shall ever be able to explain why certain affections of the body produce such a distinct emotion of mind, and no other, or why the body is at all affected by the mind, or the mind by the body. A little thought will show this to be impossible. But I conceive, if we can discover what affections of the mind produce certain emotions of the body, and what distinct feelings and qualities shall produce certain determinate passions in the mind, and no others, I fancy a great deal will be done; something not unuseful toward a distinct knowledge of our passions, so far, at least, as we have them at present under our consideration. This is all, I believe, we can do. If we could advance a step farther, difficulties would still remain, as we should be still equally distant from the first cause. When Newton first discovered the property of attraction, and settled its laws, he found it served very well to explain several of the most remarkable

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How is our author to be understood when he says he intends to inquire into the efficient cause of sublimity and beauty? To what does he not pretend? By what discovery will a great deal be done, and toward what knowledge will it be useful? Suppose we could advance a step farther, what would be the consequence? In the case of Newton's discovery, how is this remark illustrated?

phenomena in nature ; but yet, with reference to the general system of things, he could consider attraction but as an effect, whose cause, at that time, he did not attempt to trace. But when he afterward began to account for it by a subtile elastic æther, this great man (if in so great a man it be not impious to discover any thing like a blemish) seemed to have quitted his usual cautious manner of philosophizing ; since, perhaps, allowing all that has been advanced on this subject to be sufficiently proved, I think it leaves us with as many difficulties as it found us. That great chain of causes, which, linking one to another, even to the throne of God himself, can never be unravelled by any industry of ours. When we go but one step beyond the immediately sensible qualities of things, we go out of our depth. All we do after is but a faint struggle, that shows we are in an element that does not belong to us. So that, when I speak of cause and efficient cause, I only mean certain affections of the mind that cause certain changes in the body, or certain powers and properties in bodies that work a change in the mind : as, if I were to explain the motion of a body falling to the ground, I would say it was caused by gravity ; and I would endeavor to show after what manner this power operated, without attempting to show why it operated in this manner : or if I were to explain the effects of bodies striking one another by the common laws of percussion, I should not endeavor to explain how motion itself is communicated.

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Of the great chain of cause and effect, what is said ? What is the consequence of stepping beyond the immediately sensible qualities of things ? When cause and efficient cause are spoken of, what only is meant ? How is this illustrated ?

## SECTION II.

## ASSOCIATION.

It is no small bar in the way of our inquiry into the cause of our passions, that the occasion of many of them are given, and that their governing motions are communicated at a time when we have not capacity to reflect on them; at a time, of which all sort of memory is worn out of our minds: for, besides such things as affect us in various manners, according to their natural powers, there are associations made at that early season which we find it very hard afterward to distinguish from natural effects. Not to mention the unaccountable antipathies which we find in many persons, we all find it impossible to remember when a steep became more terrible than a plain, or fire or water more dreadful than a clod of earth; though all these are very probably either conclusions from experience, or arising from the premonitions of others; and some of them impressed, in all likelihood, pretty late. But as it must be allowed that many things affect us after a certain manner, not by any natural powers they have for that purpose, but by association, so it would be absurd, on the other hand, to say that all things affect us by association only, since some things must have been originally and naturally agreeable or disagreeable, from which the others derive their associated powers; and it would be, I fancy, to little purpose to look for the cause of our passions in association, until we fail of it in the natural properties of things.

What serves as a barrier in the way of our inquiry into the cause of our passions, and why? How is this illustrated? What must be allowed? What, on the other hand, would be absurd, and why? What would be of little purpose?



## SECTION III.

## CAUSE OF PAIN AND FEAR.

I HAVE before observed,\* that whatever is qualified to cause terror is a foundation capable of the sublime; to which I add, that not only these, but many things from which we can not, probably, apprehend any danger, have a similar effect, because they operate in a similar manner. I observe, too, that whatever produces pleasure, positive and original pleasure, is fit to have beauty ingrafted on it.† Therefore, to clear up the nature of these qualities, it may be necessary to explain the nature of pain and pleasure, on which they depend. A man who suffers under violent bodily pain (I suppose the most violent, because the effect may be the more obvious); I say, a man in great pain has his teeth set, his eyebrows are violently contracted, his forehead is wrinkled, his eyes are dragged inward, and rolled with great vehemence, his hair stands an end, the voice is forced out in short shrieks and groans, and the whole fabric totters. Fear or terror, which is an apprehension of pain or death, exhibits exactly the same effects, approaching in violence to those just mentioned, in proportion to the nearness of the cause and the weakness of the subject. This is not only so in the human species, but I have more than once observed in dogs, under an apprehension of punishment, that they have writhed their bodies, and yelped and howled, as if they had actually felt the blows. From whence I

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What was before observed, and to it what is now added? What also is observed? Therefore, what is necessary? What is said of the man who suffers violent bodily pain? Of fear and terror, what is remarked? What illustration is given? and hence what conclusions are drawn?

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\* Part I., sect. viii.

† Part I., sect. x.

conclude that pain and fear act upon the same parts of the body, and in the same manner, though somewhat differing in degree; that pain and fear consist in an unnatural tension of the nerves; that this is sometimes accompanied with an unnatural strength, which sometimes suddenly changes into an extraordinary weakness; that these effects often come on alternately, and are sometimes mixed with each other. This is the nature of all convulsive agitations, especially in weaker subjects, which are the most liable to the severest impressions of pain and fear. The only difference between pain and terror is, that things which cause pain operate on the mind by the intervention of the body, whereas things that cause terror generally affect the bodily organs by the operation of the mind suggesting the danger; but, both agreeing, either primarily or secondarily, in producing a tension, contraction, or violent emotion of the nerves,\* they agree likewise in every thing else; for it appears very clearly to me from this, as well as from many other examples, that when the body is disposed, by any means whatsoever, to such emotions as it would acquire by the means of a certain passion, it will of itself excite something very like that passion in the mind.]

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In what subjects especially is this the nature of all convulsive agitations, and why? What is the only difference between pain and terror? In what do they both agree? From this example, what appears manifest?

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\* I do not here enter into the question debated among physiologists, whether pain be the effect of a contraction or a tension of the nerves. Either will serve my purpose; for by tension I mean no more than a violent pulling of the fibres which compose any muscle or membrane, in whatever way this is done.

## SECTION IV.

CONTINUED.

To this purpose Mr. Spon, in his "Recherches d'Antiquité," gives us a curious story of the celebrated physiognomist Campanella. This man, it seems, had not only made very accurate observations on human faces, but was very expert in mimicking such as were in any way remarkable. When he had a mind to penetrate into the inclination of those he had to deal with, he composed his face, his gesture, and his whole body, as nearly as he could, into the exact similitude of the person he intended to examine, and then carefully observed what turn of mind he seemed to acquire by this change: so that, says my author, he was able to enter into the dispositions and thoughts of people as effectually as if he had changed into the very men. I have often observed that, on mimicking the looks and gestures of angry, or placid, or frightened, or daring men, I have involuntarily found my mind turned to that passion whose appearance I endeavored to imitate; nay, I am convinced it is hard to avoid it, though one strove to separate the passion from its correspondent gestures. Our minds and bodies are so closely and intimately connected, that one is incapable of pain or pleasure without the other. Campanella, of whom we have been speaking, could so abstract his attention from any sufferings of his body, that he was able to endure the rack itself without much pain; and, in lesser pains, every body must have observed, that when we can

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Of the physiognomist Campanella, what is observed? In what manner did he penetrate into the inclinations of those with whom he had to deal? What has our author often observed? and of what is he convinced, and why? What is farther said of Campanella? and in lesser pains, what must every body have observed?

employ our attention on any thing else, the pain has been for a time suspended : on the other hand, if, by any means, the body is imposed to perform such gestures, or to be stimulated into such emotions as any passion usually produces in it, that passion itself never can arise, though its cause should be never so strongly in action ; though it should be merely mental, and immediately affecting none of the senses ; as an opiate or spirituous liquors shall suspend the operation of grief, or fear, or anger, in spite of all our efforts to the contrary ; and this by inducing in the body a disposition contrary to that which it receives from these passions.

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## SECTION V.

### HOW THE SUBLIME IS PRODUCED.

HAVING considered terror as producing an unnatural tension and certain violent emotions of the nerves, it easily follows, from what we have just said, that whatever is fitted to produce such a tension must be productive of a passion similar to terror,\* and, consequently, must be a source of the sublime, though it should have no idea of danger connected with it : so that little remains toward showing the cause of the sublime, but to show that the instances we have given of it in the second part relate to such things as are fitted by nature to produce this sort of tension, either by

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On the other hand, what is observed ? How is this remark illustrated ?

Having considered terror as producing an unnatural tension and certain violent emotion of the nerves, what follows ? Hence what only remains toward showing the cause of the sublime ?

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\* Part ii., sect. ii.

the primary operation of the mind or the body. With regard to such things as affect by the associated idea of danger, there can be no doubt that they produce terror, and act by some modification of that passion; and that terror, when sufficiently violent, raises the emotions of the body just mentioned, can as little be doubted. But if the sublime is built on terror, or some passion like it, which has pain for its object, it is pre-viously proper to inquire how any species of delight can be derived from a cause so apparently contrary to it. I say *delight*, because, as I have often remarked, it is very evidently different in its cause and in its own nature from actual and positive pleasure.

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## SECTION VI.

### HOW PAIN CAN BE A CAUSE OF DELIGHT.

PROVIDENCE has so ordered it, that a state of rest and inaction, however it may flatter our indolence, should be productive of many inconveniences, that it should generate such disorders as may force us to have recourse to some labor, as a thing absolutely requisite to make us pass our lives with tolerable satisfaction; for the nature of rest is to suffer all the parts of our bodies to fall into a relaxation, that not only disables the members from performing their functions, but takes away the vigorous tone of fibre which is requisite for carrying on the natural and necessary secretions; at

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With regard to such things as affect by the associated idea of danger, what is observed? If the sublime is built on terror, what previous inquiry is proper? Why is the word *delight* here used?

Of a state of rest and inaction, what is remarked? What is the nature of rest?

the same time that, in this languid, inactive state, the nerves are more liable to the most horrid convulsions than when they are sufficiently braced and strengthened. Melancholy, dejection, despair, and often self-murder, are the consequence of the gloomy view we take of things in this relaxed state of body. The best remedy for all these evils is exercise or labor; and labor is a surmounting of difficulties, an exertion of the contracting power of the muscles; and, as such, resembles pain, which consists in tension or contraction, in every thing but degree. Labor is not only requisite to preserve the coarser organs in a state fit for their functions, but it is equally necessary to these finer and more delicate organs, on which and by which the imagination, and perhaps the other mental powers, act; since it is probable that not only the inferior parts of the soul, as the passions are called, but the understanding itself, makes use of some fine corporeal instruments in its operation; though what they are, and where they are, may be somewhat hard to settle; but that it does make use of such, appears from hence, that a long exercise of the mental powers induces a remarkable lassitude of the whole body; and, on the other hand, that great bodily labor or pain weakens, and sometimes actually destroys, the mental faculties. Now, as a due exercise is essential to the coarse muscular parts of the constitution, and that, without this rousing, they would become languid and diseased, the

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In this languid state, to what are the nerves more liable? and what is often the consequence? What is the best remedy for all these evils? what is it, and what does it resemble? For what, in addition to the preservation of the coarser organs, is labor requisite, and why? From what does it appear that the understanding makes use of some fine corporeal instruments in its operation? As a due exercise is essential to the coarse muscular parts of the constitution, what is the inference?

very same rule holds with regard to those finer parts we have mentioned; to have them in proper order, they must be shaken and worked to a proper degree.

## SECTION VII.....

### EXERCISE NECESSARY FOR THE FINER ORGANS.

As common labor, which is a mode of pain, is the exercise of the grosser, a mode of terror is the exercise of the finer parts of the system; and if a certain mode of pain be of such a nature as to act upon the eye or the ear, as they are the most delicate organs, the affection approaches more nearly to that which has a mental cause. In all these cases, if the pain and terror are so modified as not to be actually noxious; if the pain is not carried to violence, and the terror is not conversant about the present destruction of the person, as these emotions clear the parts, whether fine or gross, of a dangerous and troublesome incumbrance, they are capable of producing delight; not pleasure, but a sort of delightful horror; a sort of tranquillity tinged with terror; which, as it belongs to self-preservation, is one of the strongest of all the passions. Its object is the sublime.\* Its highest degree I call *astonishment*; the subordinate degrees are awe, reverence, and respect, which, by the very etymology of the words, show from what source they are derived, and how they stand distinguished from positive pleasure.

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What is the first remark? Under what circumstances, in these cases, are they capable of producing delight? What is here meant by delight? What is its highest, and what are its subordinate, degrees called? From the etymology of the words, what is shown?

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\* Part ii., sect. ii.

## SECTION VIII.

WHY THINGS NOT DANGEROUS PRODUCE A PASSION LIKE  
TERROR.

A MODE of terror or pain is always the cause of the sublime.\* For terror or associated danger the foregoing explanation is, I believe, sufficient. It will require somewhat more trouble to show that such examples as I have given of the sublime, in the second part, are capable of producing a mode of pain, and of being thus allied to terror, and to be accounted for on the same principles. And, first, of such objects as are great in their dimension: I speak of visual objects.

## SECTION IX.

WHY VISUAL OBJECTS OF GREAT DIMENSIONS ARE  
SUBLIME.

VISION is performed by having a picture formed by the rays of light which are reflected from the object painted in one piece, instantaneously, on the retina, or last nervous part of the eye. Or, according to others, there is but one point of any object painted on the eye in such a manner as to be perceived at once; but, by moving the eye, we gather up with great celerity the several parts of the object, so as to form one uniform piece. If the former opinion be allowed, it will be considered† that, though all the light reflected from

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Of what is a mode of terror or pain always the cause? For what is the foregoing explanation sufficient? What will require somewhat more trouble? What objects are first considered?

How is vision performed? What other opinion has prevailed? If the former opinion be allowed, what will be considered? and what follows?

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\* Part i., sect. vii. Part ii., sect. ii.

† Part ii., sect. vii.



a large body should strike the eye in one instant, yet we must suppose that the body itself is formed of a vast number of distinct points, every one of which, or the ray from every one, makes an impression on the retina ; so that, though the image of one point should cause but a small tension of this membrane, another, and another, and another stroke must, in their progress, cause a very great one, until it arrives at last to the highest degree ; and the whole capacity of the eye, vibrating in all its parts, must approach near to the nature of what causes pain, and, consequently, must produce an idea of the sublime. Again : if we take it that one point only of an object is distinguishable at once, the matter will amount nearly to the same thing ; or, rather, it will make the origin of the sublime from greatness of dimension yet clearer ; for, if but one point is observed at once, the eye must traverse the vast space of such bodies with great quickness, and, consequently, the fine nerves and muscles destined to the motion of that part must be very much strained, and their great sensibility must make them highly affected by this straining. Besides, it signifies just nothing to the effect produced, whether a body has its parts connected, and makes its impression at once, or, making but one impression of a point at a time, it causes a succession of the same or others so quickly as to make them seem united, as is evident from the common effect of whirling about a lighted torch or piece of wood, which, if done with celerity, seems a circle of fire.

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What will, allowing that one point only of an object is distinguishable at once, make the origin of the sublime from greatness of dimension ~~clear~~ <sup>clear</sup> or ? What in this case signifies nothing ? From what is this evident ?

## SECTION X.

## UNITY WHY REQUISITE TO VASTNESS.

It may be objected to this theory, that the eye generally receives an equal number of rays at all times, and that, therefore, a great object can not affect it by the number of rays, more than that variety of objects which the eye must always discern while it remains open. But to this I answer, that, admitting an equal number of rays, or an equal quantity of luminous particles, to strike the eye at all times, yet, if these rays frequently vary their nature, now to blue, now to red, and so on, or their manner of termination, as to a number of petty squares, triangles, or the like, at every change, whether of color or shape, the organ has a sort of a relaxation or rest; but this relaxation and labor, so often interrupted, is by no means productive of ease, neither has it the effect of vigorous and uniform labor. Whoever has remarked the different effects of some strong exercise, and some little piddling action, will understand why a teasing, fretful employment, which at once wearies and weakens the body, should have nothing great; these sorts of impulses, which are rather teasing than painful, by continually and suddenly altering their tenor and direction, prevent that full tension, that species of uniform labor, which is allied to strong pain, and causes the sublime. The sum total of things of various kinds, though it should equal the number of the uniform parts composing some *one* entire object, is not equal in its effect

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To this theory what may be objected? How is this objection answered? What will he understand who has remarked the different effects of some strong exercise and some trifling action? What do these sorts of impulses prevent? Of the sum total of things of various kinds, what is observed?

upon the organs of our bodies. Besides the one already assigned, there is another very strong reason for the difference. The mind, in reality, hardly ever can attend diligently to more than one thing at a time; if this thing be little, the effect is little, and a number of other little objects can not engage the attention; the mind is bounded by the bounds of the object; and what is not attended to, and what does not exist, are much the same in the effect: but the eye, or the mind (for in this case there is no difference), in great uniform objects, does not readily arrive at their bounds; it has no rest while it contemplates them; the image is much the same every where; so that every thing great by its quantity must necessarily be one, simple, and entire.

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## SECTION XI.

### THE ARTIFICIAL INFINITE.

WE have observed that a species of greatness arises from the artificial infinite, and that this infinite consists in a uniform succession of great parts: we observed, too, that the same uniform succession had a like power in sounds. But, because the effects of many things are clearer in one of the senses than in another, and that all the senses bear an analogy to and illustrate one another, I shall begin with this power in sounds, as the cause of the sublimity from succession is rather more obvious in the sense of hearing. And I shall here once for all observe, that an investi-

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What reason have we, in addition to the one already assigned, for this difference? Why must every thing great by its quantity necessarily be one, simple, and entire?

*What have we observed?* For what reasons do we begin with this power in sounds? What observation is here once for all made?

gation of the natural and mechanical causes of our passions, besides the curiosity of the subject, gives, if they are discovered, a double strength and lustre to any rules we deliver on such matters. When the ear receives any simple sound, it is struck by a single pulse of the air, which makes the ear-drum and the other membranous parts vibrate according to the nature and species of the stroke. If the stroke be strong, the organ of hearing suffers a considerable degree of tension. If the stroke be repeated pretty soon after, the repetition causes an expectation of another stroke. And it must be observed, that expectation itself causes a tension. This is apparent in many animals, who, when they prepare for hearing any sound, rouse themselves, and prick up their ears: so that here the effect of the sounds is considerably augmented by a new auxiliary, the expectation. But though, after a number of strokes, we expect still more, not being able to ascertain the exact time of their arrival, when they arrive, they produce a sort of surprise, which increases this tension yet farther; for I have observed, that when at any time I have waited very earnestly for some sound, that returned at intervals (as the successive firing of cannon), though I fully expected the return of the sound, when it came it always made me start a little: the ear-drum suffered a convulsion, and the whole body consented with it. ✓ The tension of the part thus increasing at every blow by the united forces of the stroke itself, the expectation, and the surprise, it is worked up to such a pitch as to be capable of the

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How is the ear affected in receiving any simple sound? If the stroke be strong, what is the consequence? If it be repeated, what expectation is excited? and what must be observed? How is this apparent? and by what is the effect augmented? How is this tension still farther increased? How is this illustrated? How does the tension become capable of the sublime?

sublime ; it is brought just to the verge of pain. Even when the cause has ceased, the organs of hearing, being often successively struck in a similar manner, continue to vibrate in that manner for some time longer ; this is an additional help to the greatness of the effect.

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## SECTION XII.

### THE VIBRATIONS MUST BE SIMILAR.

BUT if the vibration be not similar at every impression, it can never be carried beyond the number of actual impressions ; for, move any body, as a pendulum, in one way, and it will continue to oscillate in an arch of the same circle until the known causes make it rest ; but if, after first putting it in motion in one direction, you push it into another, it can never reassume the first direction, because it can never move itself, and, consequently, it can have but that effect of the last motion ; whereas, if in the same direction you act upon it several times, it will describe a greater arch, and move a longer time.

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## SECTION XIII.

### THE EFFECT OF SUCCESSION IN VISUAL OBJECTS EXPLAINED.

If we can comprehend clearly how things operate

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What is an additional help to the greatness of the effect ?

How is it illustrated, that if the vibration be not similar at every impression, it can not be carried beyond their actual number ? What will be the consequence, after having put it in motion in one direction, of moving it *into another* ? What will result from acting upon it several times in the *same direction* ?

upon one of our senses, there can be very little difficulty in conceiving in what manner they affect the rest. To say a great deal, therefore, upon the corresponding affections of every sense, would tend rather to fatigue us by a useless repetition, than to throw any new light upon the subject, by that ample and diffuse manner of treating it; but as, in this discourse, we chiefly attach ourselves to the sublime as it affects the eye, we shall consider particularly why a successive disposition of uniform parts in the same right line should be sublime,\* and upon what principle this disposition is enabled to make a comparatively small quantity of matter produce a grander effect than a much larger quantity disposed in another manner. To avoid the perplexity of general notions, let us set before our eyes a colonnade of uniform pillars planted in a right line; let us take our stand in such a manner that the eye may shoot along this colonnade, for it has its best effect in this view. In our present situation, it is plain that the rays from the first round pillar will cause in the eye a vibration of that species—an image of the pillar itself. The pillar immediately succeeding increases it; that which follows renews and enforces the impression; each in its order, as it succeeds, repeats impulse after impulse, and stroke after stroke, until the eye, long exercised in one particular way, can not lose that object immediately; and, being violently roused by this continued agitation, it presents the mind with a grand or

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What results from a clear comprehension of the manner in which things operate upon one of the senses? To what, therefore, would saying much upon the corresponding affections of every sense tend? To what, in this discourse, shall we attach ourselves? and what shall we consider? How shall we avoid the perplexity of general notions? In this situation, how will the successive pillars affect us?

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sublime conception. But, instead of viewing a rank of uniform pillars, let us suppose that they succeed each other, a round and a square one alternately. In this case, the vibration caused by the first round pillar perishes as soon as it is formed; and one of quite another sort (the square) directly occupies its place, which, however, it resigns as quickly to the round one; and thus the eye proceeds alternately, taking up one image and laying down another, as long as the building continues: from whence it is obvious that, at the last pillar, the impression is as far from continuing as it was at the very first; because, in fact, the sensory can receive no distinct impression but from the last, and it can never of itself resume a dissimilar impression: besides, every variation of the object is a rest and relaxation to the organs of sight; and these reliefs prevent that powerful emotion so necessary to produce the sublime. To produce, therefore, a perfect grandeur in such things as we have been mentioning, there should be a perfect simplicity, an absolute uniformity in disposition, shape, and coloring. Upon this principle of succession and uniformity it may be asked, Why a long, bare wall should not be a more sublime object than a colonnade, since the succession is no way interrupted, since the eye meets no check, since nothing more uniform can be conceived? A long, bare wall is certainly not so grand an object as a colonnade of the same length and height. It is not altogether diffi-

How would we be affected by an alternate succession of round and square pillars? From this what is obvious, and why? Of every variation of the object, what is observed? To produce, therefore, a perfect grandeur in such things, what is requisite? Upon this principle of succession and uniformity, what question may arise? How can you account for the different impression made by a long, bare wall, and a colonnade of the same length and height?

cult to account for this difference. When we look at a naked wall, from the evenness of the object, the eye runs along its whole space, and arrives quickly at its termination; the eye meets nothing which may interrupt its progress; but then it meets nothing which may detain it a proper time to produce a very great and lasting effect. ~~The~~ view of a bare wall, if it be of a great height and length, is undoubtedly grand: but this is only *one* idea, and not a *repetition* of *similar* ideas; it is therefore great, not so much upon the principle of *infinity*, as upon that of *vastness*. But we are not so powerfully affected with any one impulse, unless it be one of a prodigious force indeed, as we are with a succession of similar impulses; because the nerves of the sensory do not (if I may use the expression) acquire a habit of repeating the same feeling in such a manner as to continue it longer than its cause is in action; besides, all the effects which I have attributed to expectation and surprise, in sect. ii., can have no place in a bare wall.

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## SECTION XIV.

### LOCKE'S OPINION CONCERNING DARKNESS CONSIDERED.

IT is Mr. Locke's opinion that darkness is not naturally an idea of terror; and that, though an excessive light is painful to the sense, that the greatest excess of darkness is in no way troublesome. He observes, in-

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Why is the view of a wall of great height and length grand? Why are we not so powerfully affected with any one impulse as we are with a succession of similar impulses? Besides, what effects can have no place in a bare wall?

What is Mr. Locke's opinion of darkness? What does he observe in another place?



deed, in another place, that a purse, or an old woman, having once associated the ideas of ghosts and goblins with that of darkness, night ever after becomes painful and horrible to the imagination. The authority of this great man is doubtless as great as that of any man can be, and it seems to stand in the way of our general principle.\* We have considered darkness as a cause of the sublime, and we have all along considered the sublime as depending on some modification of pain or terror; so that, if darkness be in no way painful or terrible to any who have not had their minds early tainted with superstitions, it can be no source of the sublime to them. But, with all deference to such an authority, it seems to me that an association of a more general nature, an association which takes in all mankind, may make darkness terrible: for, in utter darkness, it is impossible to know in what degree of safety we stand; we are ignorant of the objects that surround us; we may every moment strike against some dangerous obstruction; we may fall down a precipice the first step we take; and, if an enemy approach, we know not in what quarter to defend ourselves: in such a case strength is no sure protection; wisdom can only act by guess; the boldest are staggered; and he who would pray for nothing else toward his defense, is forced to pray for light:

Ζεῦ πάτερ, ἀλλὰ σὺ βῦσαι ὑπ' ἥρος νύας Ἀχαιῶν,  
Ποίησον δ' αἰθρην, δὸς δ' ὀφθαλμοῖσιν ἰδέσθαι  
'Εν δὲ φάει καὶ δλεσσον.—*Hom., Il., xvii., 645.*

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Of the authority of this great man, what is said? How have we considered darkness? and how have we all along considered the sublime? What, therefore, follows? Why may an association of a more general nature make darkness terrible? Of strength and wisdom under such circumstances, what is remarked? and what is the consequence?

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\* Part ii., sect. iii.

"Dispel this cloud, the light of heaven restore;  
 Give me to see, and Ajax asks no more:  
If Greece must perish, we thy will obey,  
But let us perish in the face of day."

As to the association of ghosts and goblins, surely it is more natural to think that darkness, being originally an idea of terror, was chosen as a fit scene for such terrible representations, than that such representations have made darkness terrible. The mind of man very easily slides into an error of the former sort; but it is very hard to imagine that the effect of an idea so universally terrible in all times and in all countries, as darkness, could possibly have been owing to a set of idle stories, or to any cause of a nature so trivial, and of an operation so precarious.

## SECTION XV.

### DARKNESS TERRIBLE IN ITS OWN NATURE.

PERHAPS it may appear, on inquiry, that blackness and darkness are, in some degree, painful by their natural operation, independent of any associations whatsoever. I must observe, that the ideas of darkness and blackness are much the same; and they differ only in this, that blackness is a more confined idea. Mr. Cheselden has given us a very curious story of a boy who had been born blind, and continued so until he was thirteen or fourteen years old; he was then couched for a cataract, by which operation he received his sight. Among many remarkable particulars

Repeat Ajax's prayer. Of the association of ghosts and goblins, what is said? Though the mind of man very easily slides into an error of the former kind, yet what is it very hard to imagine?

What may, perhaps, on inquiry, appear? Of the ideas of darkness and blackness, what is observed? What story has Mr. Cheselden given us?

that attended his first perceptions and judgments on visual objects, Cheselden tells us, that the first time the boy saw a black object, it gave him great uneasiness; and that, some time after, upon accidentally seeing a negro woman, he was struck with great horror at the sight. The horror in this case can scarcely be supposed to arise from any association. The boy appears, by the account, to have been particularly observing and sensible for one of his age; and therefore it is probable, if the great uneasiness be felt at the first sight of black had arisen from its connection with any other disagreeable ideas, he would have observed and mentioned it; for an idea, disagreeable only by association, has the cause of its ill effect on the passions evident enough at the first impression: in ordinary cases, it is indeed frequently lost; but this is because the original association was made very early, and the consequent impression repeated often. In our instance, there was no time for such a habit; and there is no reason to think that the ill effects of black on his imagination were more owing to its connection with any disagreeable ideas than that the good effects of more cheerful colors were derived from their connection with pleasing ones. They had both, probably, their effects from their natural operation.

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## SECTION XVI.

### WHY DARKNESS IS TERRIBLE.

It may be worth while to examine how darkness

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Among many remarkable particulars that attended his first perceptions of visual objects, what are mentioned? Why can not the horror in this case be supposed to arise from any association? Why is this, in ordinary cases, lost? As in this instance there was no time for such a habit, what follows?

can operate in such a manner as to cause pain. It is observable that, still as we recede from the light, nature has so contrived it that the pupil is enlarged by the retiring of the iris, in proportion to our recess. Now, instead of declining from it but a little, suppose that we withdraw entirely from the light, it is reasonable to think that the contraction of the radial fibres of the iris is proportionably greater; and that this part may, by great darkness, come to be so contracted as to strain the nerves that compose it beyond their natural tone, and by this means to produce a painful sensation. Such a tension, it seems, there certainly is, while we are involved in darkness; for, in such a state, while the eye remains open, there is a continual nusus to receive light: this is manifest from the flashes and luminous appearances which often seem, in these circumstances, to play before it, and which can be nothing but the effect of spasms produced by its own efforts in pursuit of its object: several other strong impulses will produce the idea of light in the eye besides the substance of light itself, as we experience on many occasions. Some, who allow darkness to be a cause of the sublime, would infer, from the dilatation of the pupil, that a relaxation may be productive of the sublime as well as a convulsion: but they do not, I believe, consider that, although the circular ring of the iris be in some sense a sphincter, which may possibly be dilated by a simple relaxation, yet in one respect it

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What examination is worthy of our attention? and what is observable? If, instead of declining from the light but a little, we withdraw from it altogether, what is it reasonable to suppose would be the consequence? How does it appear that there is such a tension while we are involved in darkness? From what is this manifest? Of other strong impulses, what is said? What would some who allow darkness to be a cause of the *sublime* infer? but what do they not consider?

differs from most of the other sphincters of the body ; that it is furnished with antagonist muscles, which are the radial fibres of the iris : no sooner does the circular muscle begin to relax, than these fibres, wanting their counterpoise, are forcibly drawn back, and open the pupil to a considerable wideness. But though we were not apprized of this, I believe any one will find, if he opens his eyes, and makes an effort to see in a dark place, that a very perceivable pain ensues. And I have heard some ladies remark that, after having worked a long time upon a ground of black, their eyes were so pained and weakened they could hardly see. It may, perhaps, be objected to this theory of the mechanical effect of darkness, that the ill effects of darkness or blackness seem rather mental than corporeal ; and I own it is true that they do so ; and so do all those that depend on the affections of the finer parts of our system. The ill effects of bad weather appear often no otherwise than in a melancholy and dejection of spirits ; though, without doubt, in this case, the bodily organs suffer first, and the mind through these organs.

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## SECTION XVII.

### THE EFFECTS OF BLACKNESS.

BLACKNESS is but a *partial darkness* ; and, therefore, it derives some of its powers from being mixed and surrounded with colored bodies. In its own na-

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Without being apprized of this, what will any one find who opens his eyes and attempts to see in a dark place ? What do ladies frequently remark ? What objection may be raised to this theory of the mechanical effects of darkness ? What is said of this objection ? and how is it illustrated from *the effects of bad weather* ?

*Of blackness and of black bodies, what is remarked ?*

ture it cannot be considered as a color. Black bodies, reflecting none, or but a few rays, with regard to sight, are but as so many vacant spaces dispersed among the objects we view. When the eye lights on one of these vacuities, after having been kept in some degree of tension by the play of the adjacent colors upon it, it suddenly falls into a relaxation ; out of which it as suddenly recovers by a compulsive spring. To illustrate this, let us consider that when we intend to sit in a chair, and find it much lower than we expected, the shock is very violent ; much more violent than could be thought from so slight a fall as the difference between one chair and another can possibly make. If, after descending a flight of stairs, we attempt inadvertently to take another step in the manner of the former ones, the shock is extremely rude and disagreeable ; and by no art can we cause such a shock by the same means when we expect and prepare for it. When I say that this is owing to having the change made contrary to expectation, I do not mean solely when the *mind* expects : I mean likewise, that when any organ of sense is for some time affected in some one manner, if it be suddenly affected otherwise, there ensues a convulsive motion ; such a convulsion as is caused when any thing happens against the expectance of the mind. And though it may appear strange that such a change as produces a relaxation should immediately produce a sudden convulsion, it is yet most certainly so, and so in all senses. Every one knows that sleep is a relaxation ; and that silence, where nothing keeps the or-

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What effect is produced when the eye lights upon one of these vacuities ? How is this illustrated ? When our author says that this is owing to having the change made contrary to expectation, what does he mean ? How does it appear that such a change as produces a relaxation, at the same time produces a sudden convulsion also ?

gans of hearing in action, is in general fittest to bring on this relaxation; yet, when a sort of murmuring sounds dispose a man to sleep, let these sounds cease suddenly, and the person immediately awakes; that is, the parts are braced up suddenly, and he awakes. This I have often experienced myself; and I have heard the same from observing persons. In like manner, if a person in broad daylight were falling asleep, to introduce a sudden darkness would prevent his sleep for that time, though silence and darkness in themselves, and not suddenly introduced, are very favorable to it. This I knew only by conjecture on the analogy of the senses, when I first digested these observations; but I have since experienced it. And I have often experienced, and so have a thousand others, that, on the first inclining toward sleep, we have been suddenly awakened with a most violent start, and that this start was generally preceded by a sort of dream of our falling down a precipice. Whence does this strange motion arise, but from the too sudden relaxation of the body, which, by some mechanism in nature, restores itself by as quick and vigorous an exertion of the contracting power of the muscles? The dream itself is caused by this relaxation; and it is of too uniform a nature to be attributed to any other cause. The parts relax too suddenly, which is in the nature of falling; and this accident of the body induces this image in the mind. When we are in a confirmed state of health and vigor, as all changes are then less sudden, and less on the extreme, we can seldom complain of this disagreeable sensation.

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What have we all frequently experienced? Whence does this strange motion arise? Of the dream itself, what is observed? When can we seldom complain of this disagreeable sensation, and why?

## SECTION XVIII.

## THE EFFECTS OF BLACKNESS MODERATED.

THOUGH the effects of black be painful originally, we must not think they always continue so. Custom reconciles us to every thing. After we have been used to the sight of black objects, the terror abates, and the smoothness and glossiness, or some agreeable accident of bodies so colored, softens in some measure the horror and sternness of their original nature; yet the nature of the original impression still continues. Black will always have something melancholy in it, because the sensory will always find the change to it, from other colors, too violent; or, if it occupy the whole compass of the sight, it will then be darkness; and what was said of darkness will be applicable here. I do not purpose to go into all that might be said to illustrate this theory of the effects of light and darkness; neither will I examine all the different effects produced by the various modifications and mixtures of these two causes. If the foregoing observations have any foundation in nature, I conceive them very sufficient to account for all the phenomena that can arise from all the combinations of black with other colors. To enter into every particular, or to answer every objection, would be an endless labor. We have only followed the most leading roads; and we shall observe the same conduct in our inquiry into the cause of beauty.

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Of the effects of black, what is observed? In what manner do we be come reconciled to it? Why will black always have something melancholy in it? What is not intended to be done? Of the foregoing observations, what is observed? What would be an endless labor? What have we done, and what shall we do?



## SECTION XIX.

## THE PHYSICAL CAUSE OF LOVE.

WHEN we have before us such objects as excite love and complacency, the body is affected, so far as I could observe, much in the following manner: The head reclines something on one side; the eyelids are more closed than usual, and the eyes roll gently with an inclination to the object; the mouth is a little opened, and the breath drawn slowly, with now and then a low sigh; the whole body is composed, and the hands fall idly to the sides. All this is accompanied with an inward sense of melting and languor. These appearances are always proportioned to the degree of beauty in the object, and of sensibility in the observer. And this gradation from the highest pitch of beauty and sensibility, even to the lowest of mediocrity and indifference, and their correspondent effects, ought to be kept in view, else this description will seem exaggerated, which it certainly is not. But, from this description, it is almost impossible not to conclude that beauty acts by relaxing the solids of the whole system. There are all the appearances of such a relaxation; and a relaxation somewhat below the natural tone seems to me to be the cause of all positive pleasure. Who is a stranger to that manner of expression so common in all times and in all countries, of being softened, relaxed, enervated, dissolved, melted away by pleasure? The universal voice of mankind, faithful to their feelings, con-

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When we have before us such objects as excite love and complacency, how is the body affected? With what is all this accompanied? To what are these appearances always proportioned? How ought this gradation to be kept in view, and why? From this description, what conclusion is necessarily drawn? What seems to be the cause of all positive pleasure? In affirming what uniform and general effect does the voice of mankind concur?

curs in affirming this uniform and general effect ; and although some odd and particular instance may perhaps be found, wherein there appears a considerable degree of positive pleasure, without all the characters of relaxation, we must not, therefore, reject the conclusion we had drawn from a concurrence of many experiments ; but we must still retain it, subjoining the exceptions which may occur, according to the judicious rule laid down by Sir Isaac Newton in the third book of his Optics. Our position will, I conceive, appear confirmed beyond any reasonable doubt, if we can show that such things as we have already observed to be the genuine constituents of beauty, have each of them, separately taken, a natural tendency to relax the fibres. And if it must be allowed us, that the appearance of the human body, when all these constituents are united together before the sensory, farther favors this opinion, we may venture, I believe, to conclude that the passion called love is produced by this relaxation. By the same method of reasoning which we have used in the inquiry into the causes of the sublime, we may likewise conclude, that as a beautiful object presented to the sense, by causing a relaxation in the body, produces the passion of love in the mind ; so, if by any means the passion should first have its origin in the mind, a relaxation of the outward organs will as certainly ensue in a degree proportioned to the cause.

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What is not sufficient to induce us to reject the conclusion we have drawn ? But with what exceptions must we retain it ? By showing what will our position appear confirmed beyond any reasonable doubt ? With what concession may we venture to conclude that the passion called love is produced by this relaxation ? By the method of reasoning used in the inquiry into the causes of the sublime, what farther conclusion may be drawn ? and what follows ?

## SECTION XX.

## WHY SMOOTHNESS IS BEAUTIFUL.

It is to explain the true cause of visual beauty that I call in the assistance of the other senses. If it appears that *smoothness* is a principal cause of pleasure to the touch, taste, smell, and hearing, it will be easily admitted a constituent of visual beauty; especially as we have before shown that this quality is found, almost without exception, in all bodies that are by general consent held beautiful. There can be no doubt that bodies which are rough and angular rouse and vellicate the organs of feeling, causing a sense of pain, which consists in the violent tension or contraction of the muscular fibres. On the contrary, the application of smooth bodies relax; gentle stroking with a smooth hand allays violent pains and cramps, and relaxes the suffering parts from their unnatural tension; and it has, therefore, very often, no mean effect in removing swellings and obstructions. The sense of feeling is highly gratified with smooth bodies. A bed smoothly laid, and soft, that is, where the resistance is every way inconsiderable, is a great luxury, disposing to a universal relaxation, and inducing, beyond any thing else, that species of it called sleep.

## SECTION XXI.

## SWEETNESS, ITS NATURE.

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NOR is it only in the touch that smooth bodies cause

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For what purpose is the assistance of other senses called in? With what concession will it be easily admitted that smoothness is a constituent of visual beauty? Of what can there be no doubt? How does it appear that the application of smooth bodies relax? From what does it appear that the sense of feeling is highly gratified with smooth bodies?

positive pleasure by relaxation. In the smell and taste we find all things agreeable to them, and which are commonly called sweet, to be of a smooth nature, and that they all evidently tend to relax their respective sensories. Let us first consider the taste. Since it is most easy to inquire into the property of liquids, and since all things seem to want a fluid vehicle to make them tasted at all, I intend rather to consider the liquid than the solid parts of our food. The vehicles of all tastes are *water* and *oil*; and what determines the taste is some salt, which affects variously, according to its nature, or its manner of being combined with other things. Water and oil, simply considered, are capable of giving some pleasure to the taste. Water, when simple, is insipid, inodorous, colorless, and smooth; it is found, when *not cold*, to be a great resolver of spasms, and lubricator of the fibres: this power it probably owes to its smoothness; for as fluidity depends, according to the most general opinion, on the roundness, smoothness, and weak cohesion of the component parts of any body, and as water acts merely as a simple fluid, it follows that the cause of its fluidity is likewise the cause of its relaxing quality; namely, the smoothness and slippery texture of its parts. The other fluid vehicle of tastes is *oil*. This, too, when simple, is insipid, inodorous, colorless, and smooth to the touch and taste. It is smoother than water, and in many cases yet more relaxing. Oil is in some degree pleasant to the eye, the touch, and the taste, insipid as it is. Water is not so grateful; for which I do not know on what

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In the smell and taste, what do we find? Why are the liquid, rather than the solid parts of our food, considered? What are the vehicles of tastes? What is it that determines the taste? Of water, what is observed? Why is this owing to its smoothness? What is observed of oil? Why is not water as grateful to the eye as oil?

principle to account, other than that water is not so soft and smooth. Suppose that to this oil or water were added a certain quantity of a specific salt, which had a power of putting the nervous papillæ of the tongue into a gentle vibratory motion : as, suppose sugar dissolved in it ; the smoothness of the oil, and the vibratory power of the salt, cause the sense we call sweetness. In all sweet bodies, sugar, or a substance very little different from sugar, is constantly found : every species of salt, examined by the microscope, has its own distinct, regular, invariable form. That of nitre is a pointed oblong ; that of sea-salt an exact cube ; that of sugar a perfect globe. If you have tried how smooth globular bodies, as the marbles with which boys amuse themselves, have affected the touch when they are rolled backward and forward, and over one another, you will easily conceive how sweetness, which consists in a salt of such nature, affects the taste ; for a single globe, though somewhat pleasant to the feeling, yet, by the regularity of its form, and the somewhat too sudden deviation of its parts from a right line, it is nothing near so pleasant to the touch as several globes, where the hand gently rises to one and falls to another ; and this pleasure is greatly increased if the globes are in motion, and sliding over one another ; for this soft variety prevents that weariness which the uniform disposition of the several globes would otherwise produce. Thus, in sweet liquors, the parts of the fluid vehicle, though most probably round, are yet so minute as to conceal the figure of their component parts from the

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How is the sense which we call sweetness caused ? In all sweet bodies, what is constantly found ? What has every species of salt ? What examples are given ? By what experience may we easily conceive how *sweetness* affects the taste, and why ? When is this pleasure greatly increased, and why ? How is this illustrated ?

nicest inquisition of the microscope ; and, consequently, being so excessively minute, they have a sort of flat simplicity to the taste, resembling the effects of plain, smooth bodies to the touch ; for, if a body be composed of round parts excessively small, and packed pretty closely together, the surface will be, both to the sight and touch, as if it were nearly plain and smooth. It is clear, from their unveiling their figure to the microscope, that the particles of sugar are considerably larger than those of water or oil ; and, consequently, that their effects from their roundness will be more distinct and palpable to the nervous papillæ of that nice organ the tongue : they will induce that sense called sweetness, which in a weak manner we discover in oil, and in a yet weaker in water ; for, insipid as they are, water and oil are in some degree sweet ; and it may be observed, that insipid things of all kinds approach more nearly to the nature of sweetness than to that of any other taste.

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## SECTION XXII.

### SWEETNESS RELAXING.

In the other senses, we have remarked that smooth things are relaxing. Now it ought to appear that sweet things, which are the smooth of taste, are relaxing too. It is remarkable that, in some languages, soft and sweet have but one name. *Doux*, in French,

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As the particles of sugar are considerably larger than those of water or oil, what is the consequence ? What sense will they induce ? and of it what is observed ?

Why should it appear that sweet things are relaxing ? Of soft and sweet, what is remarkable ? What examples are given ?

signifies soft as well as sweet. The Latin *dulcis*, and the Italian *dolce*, have in many cases the same double signification. That sweet things are generally relaxing, is evident; because all such, especially those which are most oily, taken frequently, or in a large quantity, very much enfeeble the tone of the stomach. Sweet smells, which bear a very great affinity to sweet tastes, relax very remarkably. The smell of flowers disposes people to drowsiness; and this relaxing effect is farther apparent from the prejudice which people of weak nerves receive from their use. It were worth while to examine whether tastes of this kind, sweet ones, tastes that are caused by smooth oils and a relaxing salt, are not the originally pleasant tastes; for many, which use has rendered such, were not at all agreeable at first. The way to examine this is to try what Nature has originally provided for us, which she has undoubtedly made originally pleasant, and to analyze this provision. *Milk* is the first support of our childhood. The component parts of this are water, oil, and a sort of a very sweet salt, called the sugar of milk. All these, when blended, have a great *smoothness* to the taste, and a relaxing quality to the skin. The next thing children covet is *fruit*, and of fruits those principally which are sweet; and every one knows that the sweetness of fruit is caused by a subtile oil, and such a salt as that mentioned in the last section. Afterward, custom, habit, the desire of novelty, and a thousand other causes, confound, adulterate, and change our palates, so that we can no lon-

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Why is it evident that sweet things are generally relaxing? Of sweet smells, and of the smell of flowers, what is observed? What examination is worth our attention, and why? In what way are we to examine this? How is this illustrated? How do our palates become confounded and changed?

ger reason with any satisfaction about them. Before we quit this article, we must observe, that as smooth things are, as such, agreeable to the taste, and are found of a relaxing quality; so, on the other hand, things which are found by experience to be of a strengthening quality, and fit to brace the fibres, are almost universally rough and pungent to the taste, and in many cases rough even to the touch. We often apply the quality of sweetness, metaphorically, to visual objects. For better carrying on this remarkable analogy of the senses, we may here call sweetness the beautiful of the taste.

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## SECTION XXIII.

### VARIATION, WHY BEAUTIFUL.

ANOTHER principal property of beautiful objects is, that the line of their parts is continually varying its direction; but it varies it by a very insensible deviation; it never varies so quickly as to surprise, or by the sharpness of its angle to cause any twitching or convulsion of the optic nerve. Nothing long continued, in the same manner, nothing very suddenly varied, can be beautiful; because both are opposite to that agreeable relaxation, which is the characteristic effect of beauty. It is thus in all the senses. A motion in a right line is that manner of moving next to a

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What observation must be made before we quit this article? To what do we often metaphorically apply the quality of sweetness? Why shall we call it the beautiful of taste?

What is another principal property of beautiful objects? Of its variation, what is observed? Why can not things continued long in the same manner, or that vary suddenly, be beautiful? How does it appear that it is thus in all the senses?



very gentle descent, in which we meet the least resistance: yet it is not that manner of moving which, next to a descent, wearies us the least. Rest certainly tends to relax; yet there is a species of motion which relaxes more than rest; a gentle oscillatory motion, a rising and falling. Rocking sets children to sleep better than absolute rest: there is, indeed, scarcely any thing at that age which gives more pleasure than to be gently lifted up and down; the manner of playing which their nurses use with children, and the weighing and swinging used afterward by themselves as a favorite amusement, evince this very sufficiently. Most people must have observed the sort of sense they have had, on being swiftly drawn in an easy coach on a smooth turf, with gradual ascents and declivities. This will give a better idea of the beautiful, and point out its probable cause better than almost any thing else. On the contrary, when one is hurried over a rough, rocky, broken road, the pain felt by these sudden inequalities shows why similar sights, feelings, and sounds are so contrary to beauty; and, with regard to the feeling, it is exactly the same in its effect, or very nearly the same, whether, for instance, I move my hand along the surface of a body of a certain shape, or whether such a body is moved along my hand. But to bring this analogy of the senses home to the eye: if a body presented to that sense has such a waving surface that the rays of light reflected from it are in a continual insensible deviation from the strongest to the weakest (which is always the case in a sur-

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What must most people have observed? Of what will this give a better idea than almost any thing else? What is the effect of being hurried over a rough, rocky, broken road? How is this analogy of the senses brought home to the eye?

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face gradually unequal), it must be exactly similar in its effect on the eye and touch; upon the one of which it operates directly, on the other indirectly; and this body will be beautiful if the lines which compose its surface are not continued, even so varied, in a manner that may weary or dissipate the attention. The variation itself must be continually varied.

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## SECTION XXIV.

### CONCERNING SMALLNESS.

- To avoid a sameness which may arise from the too frequent repetition of the same reasonings, and of illustrations of the same nature, I will not enter very minutely into every particular that regards beauty, as it is founded on the disposition of its quantity, or its quantity itself. In speaking of the magnitude of bodies there is great uncertainty, because the ideas of great and small are terms almost entirely relative to the species of the objects, which are infinite. It is true that, having once fixed the species of any object, and the dimensions common in the individuals of that species, we may observe some that exceed, and some that fall short of, the ordinary standard: these which greatly exceed are by that excess, provided the species itself be not very small, rather great and terrible than beautiful; but as in the animal world, and, in a good measure, in the vegetable world likewise, the qualities that constitute beauty may possibly be united to things

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Why does not our author enter very minutely into every particular that regards beauty? Why is there uncertainty in speaking of the magnitude of bodies? Having fixed the standard of any species, what may we observe? Of those that greatly exceed this standard, what is remarked?

of greater dimensions; when they are so united, they constitute a species something different both from the sublime and beautiful, which I have before called *fine*; but this kind, I imagine, has not such a power on the passions, either as vast bodies have which are endued with the correspondent qualities of the sublime; or as the qualities of beauty have, when united in a small object. The affection produced by large bodies, adorned with the spoils of beauty, is a tension continually relieved, which approaches to the nature of mediocrity. But if I were to say how I find myself affected upon such occasions, I should say that the sublime suffers less by being united to some of the qualities of beauty, than beauty does by being joined to greatness of quantity, or any other properties of the sublime. There is something so overruling in whatever inspires us with awe, in all things which belong ever so remotely to terror, that nothing else can stand in their presence. There lie the qualities of beauty, either dead and unoperative, or, at most, exerted to mollify the rigor and sternness of the terror which is the natural concomitant of greatness. Besides the extraordinary great in every species, the opposite to this, the dwarfish and diminutive, ought to be considered. Littleness, merely as such, has nothing contrary to the idea of beauty. The humming-bird, both in shape and coloring, yields to none of the winged species, of which it is the least; and perhaps his beauty is enhanced by

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When the qualities that constitute beauty are united to things of great dimensions, what do they form? Of this kind, what is observed? What is the affection produced by large bodies? How are beauty and the sublime on such occasions affected, and why? In this case, what is said of the qualities of beauty? Besides the extraordinary great, what ought to be considered? Of littleness merely as such, what is remarked? How is this illustrated?

his smallness. But there are animals which, when they are extremely small, are rarely (if ever) beautiful. There is a dwarfish size of men and women, which is almost constantly so gross and massive in comparison of their height, that they present us with a very disagreeable image. But should a man be found not above two or three feet high, supposing such a person to have all the parts of his body of a delicacy suitable to such a size, and otherwise endued with the common qualities of other beautiful bodies, I am pretty well convinced that a person of such a stature might be considered as beautiful ; might be the object of love ; might give us very pleasing ideas on viewing him. The only thing which could possibly interpose to check our pleasure is, that such creatures, however formed, are unusual, and are often, therefore, considered as something monstrous. The large and gigantic, though very compatible with the sublime, is contrary to the beautiful. It is impossible to suppose a giant the object of love. When we let our imagination loose in romance, the ideas we naturally annex to that size are those of tyranny, cruelty, injustice, and every thing horrid and abominable. We paint the giant ravaging the country, plundering the innocent traveler, and afterward gorged with his half-living flesh : such are Polyphemus, Cacus, and others, who make so great a figure in romances and heroic poems. The event we attend to with the greatest satisfaction is their defeat and death. I do not remember, in all that multitude

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What animals, when extremely small, are rarely beautiful ? A dwarf of what description might be the object of love ? What is the only thing in this case that could interpose to check our pleasure ? What is contrary to the beautiful, and why ? In romance, what ideas do we annex to them ? How do we paint them ? What examples are given ? To what event do we attend with the greatest satisfaction ?

of deaths with which the *Iliad* is filled, that the fall of any man remarkable for his great stature and strength touches us with pity; nor does it appear that the author, so well read in human nature, ever intended it should. It is Simoisius in the soft bloom of youth, torn from his parents, who tremble for a courage so ill suited to his strength; it is another hurried by war from the new embraces of his bride, young and fair, and a novice to the field, who melts us by his untimely fate. Achilles, in spite of the many qualities of beauty which Homer has bestowed on his outward form, and the many great virtues with which he has adorned his mind, can never make us love him. It may be observed that Homer has given the Trojans, whose fate he has designed to excite our compassion, infinitely more of the amiable social virtues than he has distributed among his Greeks. With regard to the Trojans, the passion he chooses to raise is pity; pity is a passion founded on love; and these lesser, and if I may say domestic virtues, are certainly the most amiable. But he has made the Greeks far their superiors in politic and military virtues. The councils of Priam are weak; the arms of Hector comparatively feeble; his courage far below that of Achilles. Yet we love Priam more than Agamemnon, and Hector more than his conqueror Achilles. Admiration is the passion which Homer would excite in favor of the Greeks, and he has done it by bestowing on them the virtues which have but little to do with love. This short digression is, per-

How is this illustrated? For whom do we tremble? and who melts us by his untimely fate? What is said of Achilles? Of the Trojans, what may be observed? What passion was intended to be raised toward them, and why? Of the Greek and Trojan heroes, what is observed? How has Homer excited admiration in favor of the Greeks? Why is not this digression beside our purpose?

haps, not wholly beside our purpose, where our business is to show that objects of great dimensions are incompatible with beauty, the more incompatible as they are greater: whereas the small, if ever they fail of beauty, this failure is not to be attributed to their size.

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## SECTION XXV.

### OF COLOR.

WITH regard to color, the disquisition is almost infinite; but I conceive the principles laid down in the beginning of this part are sufficient to account for the effects of them all, as well as for the agreeable effects of transparent bodies, whether fluid or solid. Suppose I look at a bottle of muddy liquor, of a blue or red color: the blue or red rays can not pass clearly to the eye, but are suddenly and unequally stopped by the intervention of little opaque bodies, which, without preparation, change the idea, and change it, too, into one disagreeable in its own nature, conformable to the principles laid down in section xxiv. But when the ray passes without such opposition through the glass or liquor, when the glass or liquor is quite transparent, the light is something softened in the passage, which makes it more agreeable even as light; and the liquor reflecting all the rays of its proper color *evenly*, it has such an effect on the eye as smooth opaque bodies have on the eye and touch; so that the pleasure here is compounded of the softness of the transmitted, and the evenness of the reflected light. This pleasure may be heightened by the common principles in other

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For what are the principles laid down at the beginning of this part sufficient? How is this illustrated? How may this pleasure be heightened?

things, if the shape of the glass which holds the transparent liquor is so judiciously varied as to present the color gradually and interchangeably weakened and strengthened with all the variety which judgment, in affairs of this nature, shall suggest. On a review of all that has been said of the effects, as well as the causes of both, it will appear that the sublime and beautiful are built on principles very different, and that their affections are as different: the great has terror for its basis, which, when it is modified, causes that emotion in the mind which I have called astonishment: the beautiful is founded on mere positive pleasure, and excites in the soul that feeling which is called love. Their causes have made the subject of this Fourth Part.

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In reviewing what has been said, what is the closing remark?

## PART V.

## SECTION I.

## OF WORDS.

NATURAL objects affect us by the laws of that connection which Providence has established between certain motions and configurations of bodies, and certain consequent feelings in our minds. Painting affects in the same manner, but with the superadded pleasure of imitation. Architecture affects by the laws of nature and the law of reason; from which latter result the rules of proportion, which make a work to be praised or censured, in the whole or in some part, when the end for which it was designed is or is not properly answered. But as to words, they seem to me to affect us in a manner very different from that in which we are affected by natural objects, or by painting or architecture; yet words have as considerable a share in exciting ideas of beauty and of the sublime as any of those, and sometimes a much greater than any of them: therefore, an inquiry into the manner by which they excite such emotions is far from being unnecessary in a discourse of this kind.

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By what laws do natural objects affect us? How does painting affect us? How does architecture affect us? and from the latter what results? Of the manner in which words affect us, what is remarked? In what have they a considerable share? and what follows?



## SECTION II.

THE COMMON EFFECT OF POETRY, NOT BY RAISING IDEAS  
OF THINGS.

THE common notion of the power of poetry and eloquence, as well as that of words in ordinary conversation, is, that they affect the mind by raising in it ideas of those things for which custom has appointed them to stand. To examine the truth of this notion, it may be requisite to observe, that words may be divided into three sorts. The first are such as represent many simple ideas, *united by nature*, to form some one determinate composition, as man, horse, tree, castle, &c. These I call *aggregate words*. The second are those that stand for one simple idea of such compositions, and no more; as red, blue, round, square, and the like. These I call *simple abstract words*. The third are those which are formed by a union, an *arbitrary* union of both the others, and of the various relations between them in greater or lesser degrees of complexity; as virtue, honor, persuasion, magistrate, and the like. These I call *compound abstract words*. Words, I am sensible, are capable of being classed into more curious distinctions; but these seem to be natural, and enough for our purpose; and they are disposed in that order in which they are commonly taught, and in which the mind gets the ideas for which they are substituted. I shall begin with the third sort of words, compound abstracts, such as virtue, honor, persuasion, docility.

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What is the common notion of the power of poetry and eloquence? To examine this notion, what is requisite? What are they? In the *classification of words*, why is not a more curious distinction made? With which *sort does our author begin?*

Of these I am convinced that, whatever power they may have on the passions, they do not derive it from any representation raised in the mind of the things for which they stand. As compositions, they are not real essences, and hardly cause, I think, any real ideas. Nobody, I believe, immediately on hearing the sounds virtue, liberty, or honor, conceives any precise notions of the particular modes of action and thinking, together with the mixed and simple ideas, and the several relations of them, for which these words are substituted; neither has he any general idea compounded of them; for, if he had, then some of those particular ones, though indistinct, perhaps, and confused, might come soon to be perceived. But this, I take it, is hardly ever the case; for, put yourself upon analyzing one of these words, and you must reduce it from one set of general words to another, and then into the simple abstracts and aggregates, in a much longer series than may be at first imagined, before any real idea emerges to light, before you come to discover any thing like the first principles of such compositions; and, when you have made such a discovery of the original ideas, the effect of the composition is utterly lost. A train of thinking of this sort is much too long to be pursued in the ordinary ways of conversation; nor is it at all necessary that it should. Such words are, in reality, but mere sounds; but they are sounds which, being used on particular occasions, wherein we receive some good, or suffer some evil, or see others affected with good or evil, or which we hear applied to

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Of these, of what is he convinced? How does it appear that, as compositions, they are not real essences? Why is this hardly ever the case? What is remarked of a train of thinking of this sort? Of such words, what is observed?

other interesting things or events ; and, being applied in such a variety of cases that we know readily by habit to what things they belong, they produce in the mind, whenever they are afterward mentioned, effects similar to those of their occasions. The sounds being often used without reference to any particular occasion, and carrying still their first impressions, they at last utterly lose their connection with the particular occasions that gave rise to them ; yet the sound, without any annexed notion, continues to operate as before.

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### SECTION III.

#### GENERAL WORDS BEFORE IDEAS.

MR. LOCKE has somewhere observed, with his usual sagacity, that most general words, those belonging to virtue and vice, good and evil, especially, are taught before the particular modes of action to which they belong are presented to the mind ; and, with them, the love of the one and the abhorrence of the other : for the minds of children are so ductile, that a nurse, or any person about a child, by seeming pleased or displeased with any thing, or even any word, may give the dispositions of the child a similar turn. When, afterward, the several occurrences in life come to be applied to these words, and that which is pleasant often appears under the name of the evil, and what is disagreeable to nature is called good and virtuous, a strange confusion of ideas and affections arises in the

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How do these sounds lose their connection with the particular occasions that gave rise to them ?

What has Mr. Locke, with his usual sagacity, observed, and why ?  
*When the occurrences of life are afterward applied to these words, what is the consequence ? How is this illustrated ?*

minds of many, and an appearance of no small contradiction between their notions and their actions. There are many who love virtue and who detest vice, and this not from hypocrisy or affectation, who, notwithstanding, very frequently act ill and wickedly in particulars without the least remorse ; because these particular occasions never came into view when the passions on the side of virtue were so warmly affected by certain words, heated originally by the breath of others ; and, for this reason, it is hard to repeat certain sets of words, though owned by themselves unoperative, without being in some degree affected, especially if a warm and affecting tone of voice accompanies them ; as, suppose,

“ Wise, valiant, generous, good, and great.”

These words, by having no application, ought to be unoperative ; but when words, commonly sacred to great occasions, are used, we are affected by them even without the occasions. When words, which have been generally so applied, are put together without any rational view, or in such a manner that they do not rightly agree with each other, the style is called bombast. And it requires, in several cases, much good sense and experience to be guarded against the force of such language ; for, when propriety is neglected, a greater number of these affecting words may be taken into the service, and a greater variety may be indulged in combining them.

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Why are not these words unoperative ? When is style bombastic ? Why does it require much good sense and experience to be guarded against the force of such language ?

## SECTION IV.

## THE EFFECTS OF WORDS.

If words have all their possible extent of power, three effects arise in the mind of the hearer. The first is, the *sound*; the second, the *picture*, or representation of the thing signified by the sound; the third is, the *affection* of the soul produced by one or by both of the foregoing. *Compounded abstract* words, of which we have been speaking (honor, justice, liberty, and the like), produce the first and the last of these effects, but not the second. *Simple abstracts* are used to signify some one simple idea, without much adverting to others which may chance to attend it, as blue, green, hot, cold, and the like; these are capable of affecting all three of the purposes of words; as the *aggregate* words, man, castle, horse, &c., are in a yet higher degree. But I am of opinion that the most general effect, even of these words, does not arise from their forming pictures of the several things they would represent in the imagination; because, on a very diligent examination of my own mind, and getting others to consider theirs, I do not find that once in twenty times any such picture is formed; and, when it is, there is most commonly a particular effort of the imagination for that purpose. But the aggregate words operate, as I said of the compound abstracts, not by presenting any image to the mind, but by having, from use, the same effect on being mentioned that their original has when it is

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If words have all their possible extent of power, what three things arise in the mind of the hearer? Of compound abstract words, what is observed? To signify what are simple abstracts used? What examples are given? and what is said of them? Why does not their most general effect arise from pictures of the several things that they would represent in the imagination? How do the aggregate words operate?

seen. Suppose we were to read a passage to this effect: "The River Danube rises in a moist and mountainous soil in the heart of Germany, where, winding to and fro, it waters several principalities, until, turning into Austria, and leaving the walls of Vienna, it passes into Hungary: there, with a vast flood, augmented by the Saave and the Drave, it quits Christendom; and, rolling through the barbarous countries which border on Tartary, it enters by many mouths into the Black Sea." In this description many things are mentioned, as mountains, rivers, cities, the sea, &c. But let any body examine himself, and see whether he has had impressed on his imagination any pictures of a river, mountain, watery soil, Germany, &c. Indeed, it is impossible, in the rapidity and quick succession of words in conversation, to have ideas both of the sound of the word and of the thing represented; besides, some words, expressing real essences, are so mixed with others of a general and nominal import, that it is impracticable to jump from sense to thought, from particulars to generals, from things to words, in such a manner as to answer the purposes of life; nor is it necessary that we should.

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## SECTION V.

### EXAMPLES THAT WORDS MAY AFFECT WITHOUT RAISING IMAGES.

I FIND it very hard to persuade several that their passions are affected by words from whence they have no

How is this illustrated? Of this description, what is said? In the rapidity and quick succession of words in conversation, what is impossible? Besides, what is remarked?

*What has our author found a very difficult task?*

ideas ; and yet harder to convince them that, in the ordinary course of conversation, we are sufficiently understood without raising any images of the things concerning which we speak. It seems to be an odd object of dispute with any man whether he has ideas in his mind or not. Of this, at first view, every man, in his own forum, ought to judge without appeal. But, strange as it may appear, we are often at a loss to know what ideas we have of things, or whether we have any ideas at all upon some subjects. It even requires a good deal of attention to be thoroughly satisfied on this head. Since I wrote these papers, I found two very striking instances of the possibility there is that a man may hear words without having any idea of the things which they represent, and yet afterward be capable of returning them to others, combined in a new way, and with great propriety, energy, and instruction. The first instance is that of Mr. Blacklock, a poet blind from his birth. Few men blessed with the most perfect sight can describe visual objects with more spirit and justness than this blind man, which can not possibly be attributed to his having a clearer conception of the things he describes than is common to other persons. Mr. Spence, in an elegant preface which he has written to the works of this poet, reasons very ingeniously, and I imagine, for the most part, very rightly, upon the cause of this extraordinary phenomenon ; but I can not altogether agree with him, that some improprieties in language and thought which occur in these poems have arisen from the blind poet's imperfect con-

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What seems to be an odd object of dispute ? Of this what is said ? To know what are we often at a loss ? Of what did our author find two striking instances after having written these papers ? What is the first ? and what is said of him ? Of Mr. Spence, in an elegant preface which he has written to the works of this poet, what is observed ?

ception of visual objects ; since such improprieties, and much greater, may be found in writers even of a higher class than Mr. Blacklock, and who, notwithstanding, possessed the faculty of seeing in its full perfection. Here is a poet doubtless as much affected by his own descriptions as any that reads them can be ; and yet he is affected with this strong enthusiasm by things of which he neither has, nor can possibly have, any idea, farther than that of a bare sound ; and why may not those who read his works be affected in the same manner that he was, with as little of any real ideas of the things described ? The second instance is of Mr. Saunderson, professor of mathematics in the University of Cambridge. This learned man had acquired great knowledge in natural philosophy, in astronomy, and whatever sciences depend upon mathematical skill. What was the most extraordinary and the most to my purpose, he gave excellent lectures upon light and colors ; and this man taught others the theory of those ideas which they had, and which he himself undoubtedly had not. But it is probable that the words red, blue, green, answered to him as well as the ideas of the colors themselves : for the ideas of greater or lesser degrees of refrangibility being applied to these words, and the blind man being instructed in what other respects they were found to agree or to disagree, it was as easy for him to reason upon the words as if he had been fully master of the ideas. Indeed, it must be owned he could make no new discoveries in the way of experiment. He did nothing but what we do eve-

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How is this illustrated ? What is the second instance ? and of him what is said ? Why is it probable that the words red, blue, and green, answered to him as well as the ideas of colors themselves ? Of him, what must be acknowledged ? and what only did he do ?



ry day in common discourse. When I wrote this last sentence, and used the words *every day* and *common discourse*, I had no images in my mind of any succession of time ; nor of men in conference with each other ; nor do I imagine that the reader will have any such ideas on reading it. Neither, when I spoke of red or blue and green, as well as refrangibility, had I these several colors, or the rays of light passing into a different medium, and there diverted from their course, painted before me in the way of images. I know very well that the mind possesses a faculty of raising such images at pleasure ; but then an act of the will is necessary to this ; and, in ordinary conversation or reading, it is very rarely that any image at all is excited in the mind. If I say "I shall go to Italy next summer," I am well understood. Yet I believe nobody has by this painted in his imagination the exact figure of the speaker passing by land or by water, or both ; sometimes on horseback, sometimes in a carriage ; with all the particulars of the journey. Still less has he any idea of Italy, the country to which I proposed to go ; or of the greenness of the fields, the ripening of the fruits, and the warmth of the air, with the change to this from a different season, which are the ideas for which the word *summer* is substituted : but least of all has he any image from the word *next* ; for this word stands for the idea of many summers, with the exclusion of all but one ; and surely the man who says *next summer* has no images of such a succession and such an exclusion. In short, it is not only of those ideas which are commonly called abstract, and of which no

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How is this illustrated ? What faculty does the mind possess ? what is necessary to this, and why ? How is this illustrated ? Of what do we converse without having any idea of them excited in the imagination ?

image at all can be formed, but even of particular real beings, that we converse without having any idea of them excited in the imagination ; as will certainly appear on a diligent examination of our own minds. Indeed, so little does poetry depend for its effect on the power of raising sensible images, that I am convinced it would lose a very considerable part of its energy if this were the necessary result of all description : because that union of affecting words, which is the most powerful of all poetical instruments, would frequently lose its force, along with its propriety and consistency, if the sensible images were always excited. There is not, perhaps, in the whole *Æneid*, a more grand and labored passage than the description of Vulcan's cavern in *Ætna*, and the works that are there carried on. Virgil dwells particularly on the formation of the thunder, which he describes unfinished under the hammers of the Cyclops. But what are the principles of this extraordinary composition ?

"Tres imbris torti radios, tres nubis aquosæ  
Addiderant ; rutili tres ignis et alitis austri  
Fulgores nunc terrificos sonitumque, metumque  
Miscebant operi, flammisque sequacibus iras."

This seems to me admirably sublime ; yet, if we attend coolly to the kind of sensible images which a combination of ideas of this sort must form, the chimeras of madmen can not appear more wild and absurd than such a picture. "*Three rays of twisted showers, three of watery clouds, three of fire, and three of the winged south wind ; then mixed they in the work terrific lightnings, and sound, and fear, and anger, with pursuing flames.*" This strange composition is formed into a

Of poetry, in connection with this subject, what is remarked, and why ? How is this illustrated ? Of this description, what is remarked ? Repeat it.

gross body ; it is hammered by the Cyclops ; it is in part polished, and partly continues rough. The truth is, if poetry gives us a noble assemblage of words corresponding to many noble ideas, which are connected by circumstances of time or place, or related to each other as cause and effect, or associated in any natural way, they may be molded together in any form, and perfectly answer their end. The picturesque connection is not demanded, because no real picture is formed ; nor is the effect of the description at all the less upon this account. What is said of Helen by Priam and the old men of his council, is generally thought to give us the highest possible idea of that fatal beauty :

Οὐ νέμεσις Τρῶας καὶ ἑκκνήμιδας Ἀχαιοὺς,  
Γοιῆδ' ἀμφὶ γυναικὶ πολλὸν χρόνον ἄλγεα πάσχειν ·  
Αἰνῶς ἀθανάτῃσι θεῆς εἰς ὧπα ἔοικεν.

"They cried, No wonder such celestial charms  
For nine long years have set the world in arms :  
What winning graces ! what majestic mien !  
She moves a goddess, and she looks a queen."—POPE.

Here is not one word said of the particulars of her beauty ; nothing which can, in the least, help us to any precise idea of her person ; but yet we are much more touched by this manner of mentioning her, than by those long and labored descriptions of Helen, whether handed down by tradition or formed by fancy, which are to be met with in some authors. I am sure it affects me much more than the minute description which Spenser has given of Belphebe ; though I own that there are parts in that description, as there are in all

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When may words in poetry be molded together in any form, and perfectly answer their end ? Why is not the picturesque connection demanded ? How is this illustrated ? Of this description, what is remarked ? How does this compare with Spenser's description of Belphebe ? and what is said of it ?

the descriptions of that excellent writer, extremely fine and poetical. The terrible picture which Lucretius has drawn of Religion, in order to display the magnanimity of his philosophical hero in opposing her, is thought to be designed with great boldness and spirit :

“ Humana ante oculos fœdè cum vita jaceret,  
In terris, oppressa gravi sub religione,  
Quæ caput e cœli regionibus ostendebat  
Horribili desuper visu mortalibus instans ;  
Primus Graius homo mortales tollere contra  
Est oculos ausus.”

“ When human life was base in the eyes of men, when every land was oppressed by severe religion, who showed her gloomy head from the regions of heaven to affrighted men, the most excellent of the Greeks dared to oppose her.”

What idea do you derive from so excellent a picture ? None at all, most certainly ; neither has the poet said a single word which might, in the least, serve to mark a single limb or feature of the phantom, which he intended to represent in all the horrors imagination can conceive. In reality, poetry and rhetoric do not succeed, in exact description, so well as painting does : their business is to affect rather by sympathy than imitation ; to display rather the effect of things on the mind of the speaker, or of others, than to present a clear idea of the things themselves. This is their most extensive province, and that in which they succeed the best.

## SECTION VI.

POETRY IS NOT STRICTLY AN IMITATIVE ART.

HENCE we may observe, that poetry, taken in its

Repeat Lucretius's picture of Religion ? What is said of it ? Why do not poetry and rhetoric succeed in exact description as well as painting does ? Hence what may we observe ?

most general sense, can not, with strict propriety, be called an art of imitation. It is, indeed, an imitation, so far as it describes the manners and passions of men, which their words can express; where *animi motus effert interpretare lingua*—"Language acts as interpreter of the mind:" there it is strictly imitation; and all merely *dramatic* poetry is of this sort. But *descriptive* poetry operates chiefly by *substitution*; by the means of sounds, which by custom have the effect of realities. Nothing is an imitation farther than as it resembles some other thing; and words undoubtedly have no sort of resemblance to the ideas for which they stand.

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## SECTION VII.

### HOW WORDS INFLUENCE THE PASSIONS.

Now, as words affect, not by any original power, but by representation, it might be supposed that their influence over the passions should be but light: yet it is quite otherwise; for we find by experience that eloquence and poetry are as capable, nay, indeed, much more capable, of making deep and lively impressions, than any other arts, and even than nature itself, in very many cases. And this arises chiefly from these three causes. First, that we take an extraordinary part in the passions of others, and that we are easily affected and brought into sympathy by any tokens which are

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How far is it an imitation? What poetry is of this sort? How does descriptive poetry operate? How far may any thing be an imitation? and what follows?

Why might it be supposed that the influence of words over the passions *should* be but light? How does it appear that it is quite otherwise? What *is the first cause from which this arises?*

shown of them ; and there are no tokens which can express all the circumstances of most passions so fully as words ; so that, if a person speaks upon any subject, he can not only convey the subject to you, but likewise the manner in which he is himself affected by it. Certain it is, that the influence of most things on our passions is not so much from the things themselves as from our opinions concerning them ; and these, again, depend very much on the opinions of other men conveyable, for the most part, by words only. Secondly, there are many things of a very affecting nature which can seldom occur in the reality ; but the words which represent them often do ; and thus they have an opportunity of making a deep impression and taking root in the mind, while the idea of the reality was transient and to some, perhaps, never really occurred in any shape, to whom it is, notwithstanding, very affecting, as war, death, famine, &c. Besides, many ideas have never been at all presented to the senses of any man but by words, as God, angels, devils, heaven, and hell ; all of which have, however, a great influence over the passions. Thirdly, by words we have it in our power to make such *combinations* as we can not possibly do otherwise. By this power of combining, we are able, by the addition of well-chosen circumstances, to give a new life and force to simple objects. In painting, we may represent any fine figure we please ; but we never can give it those enlivening touches which it may receive from words. To represent an angel in a picture, you can only draw a beautiful young man

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As there are no tokens which can express all the circumstances of most passions so fully as words, what follows ? What is certain ? What is the second cause from which this arises ? Besides this, what is remarked ? What is the third cause ? What advantage do we derive from this power of combining ? Of painting, what is remarked ?

winged ; but what painting can furnish out any thing so grand as the addition of one word, "the angel of the Lord?" It is true, I have here no clear idea ; but these words affect the mind more than the sensible image did, which is all I contend for. A picture of Priam dragged to the altar's foot, and there murdered, if it were well executed, would undoubtedly be very moving ; but there are very aggravating circumstances which it could never represent :

"Sanguine fœdantem quos ipse sacraverat ignes."

"Defiling with blood those fires which he himself had consecrated."

As a farther instance, ~~let us~~ consider those lines of Milton, where he describes the travels of the fallen angels through their dismal habitation :

"O'er many a dark and dreary vale  
They pass'd, and many a region dolorous ;  
O'er many a frozen, many a fiery Alp ;  
Rocks, caves, lakes, fens, bogs, dens, and shades of death—  
A universe of death."

Here is displayed the force of union in

"Rocks, caves, lakes, dens, bogs, fens, and shades ;"

which yet would lose the greatest part of the effect, if they were not the

"Rocks, caves, lakes, dens, bogs, fens, and shades—of Death."

The idea of this affection caused by ~~a~~ word, which nothing but a word could annex to the others, raises a very great degree of the sublime ; and this sublime is raised yet higher by what follows—a "universe of Death." Here are again two ideas presentable only by language, and a union of them great and amazing

How is the advantage of words over painting illustrated ? Of a picture of Priam, what is observed ? What instance of this have we from Milton ? In this passage, what is displayed ? How would it lose the greatest part of its effect ? By what is its sublimity increased ? Of the two ideas here presented, what is remarked ?

beyond conception, if they may properly be called ideas which present no distinct image to the mind; but still it will be difficult to conceive how words can move the passions which belong to real objects, without representing these objects clearly. This is difficult to us, because we do not sufficiently distinguish, in our observations upon language, between a clear expression and a strong expression. These are frequently confounded with each other, though they are, in reality, extremely different. The former regards the understanding; the latter belongs to the passions; the one describes a thing as it is; the other describes it as it is felt. Now, as there is a moving tone of voice, an impassioned countenance, an agitated gesture, which affect independently of the things about which they are exerted; so there are words, and certain dispositions of words, which, being peculiarly devoted to passionate subjects, and always used by those who are under the influence of any passion, touch and move us more than those which far more clearly and distinctly express the subject matter. We yield to sympathy what we refuse to description. The truth is, all verbal description, merely as naked description, though never so exact, conveys so poor and insufficient an idea of the thing described, that it could scarcely have the smallest effect, if the speaker did not call in to his aid those modes of speech that mark a strong and lively feeling in himself. Then, by the contagion of our passions, we catch a fire, already kindled in another, which probably might never have been struck out by the object described. Words, by strongly conveying the passions Still, what will be difficult, and why? What do they respectively regard and describe? and what follows? What do we yield to sympathy? Of all verbal description, what is observed? What is then the consequence? How do words fully compensate for their weakness in other respects?



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 by those means which we have already mentioned, fully compensate for their weakness in other respects. It may be observed, that very polished languages, and such as are praised for their superior clearness and perspicuity, are generally deficient in strength. The French language has that perfection and that defect. Whereas the Oriental tongues, and, in general, the languages of most unpolished people, have a great force and energy of expression; and this is but natural. Uncultivated people are but ordinary observers of things, and not critical in distinguishing them; but, for that reason, they admire more, and are more affected with what they see, and therefore express themselves in a warmer and more passionate manner. If the affection be well conveyed, it will work its effect without any clear idea; often without any idea at all of the thing which has originally given rise to it.

It might be expected, from the fertility of the subject, that I should consider poetry, as it regards the sublime and beautiful, more at large; but it must be observed that, in this light, it has been often and well handled already. It was not my design to enter into the criticism of the sublime and beautiful in any art, but to attempt to lay down such principles as may tend to ascertain, to distinguish, and to form a sort of standard for them; which purposes I thought might be best effected by an inquiry into the properties of such things in nature as raise love and astonishment in us; and by

What may be observed of very polished languages? and what example is given? Why have Oriental tongues, and the languages of most unpolished people, great energy and force of expression? If the affection be well conveyed, what will be the consequence? From the fertility of the subject, what might be expected? but what must be observed? What only was our author's design? and how did he think that this might be best effected?

showing in what manner they operated to produce these passions. ✓ Words were only so far to be considered as to show upon what principle they were capable of being the representatives of these natural things, and by what powers they were able to affect us often as strongly as the things they represent, and sometimes much more strongly.

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How far were words to be considered?

THE END.







